THE FIRST ANGLO-MARATHA WAR

1774-1783

(A Study In Military History)

A Thesis submitted for the degree of

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By

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P R E F A C E

The military aspect of the Maratha history has hardly received its due share of attention from the scholars. Captain G.V. Modak, a few years back, made an attempt to study the battle of Pratapgad (1659), which Shivaji fought against Afzal Khan, the general of the Adilshahi of Vijapur (Bijapur), from the military point of view. In the subsequent years the Marathas fought a number of battles against the Mughals, the Portuguese, the English, etc., but we hardly get any systematic account of those battles. Scholars seem to be interested only in the political and diplomatic aspects of these battles. Dr. S.N. Sen's monumental work on the 'Military System of the Marathas' deals essentially with the Maratha military administration. Dr. Shailendra Nath Sen discusses the Anglo-Maratha relations in his two works covering the period from 1773-1796. The same is the case with Dr. S.P. Varma's book 'A Study in Maratha Diplomacy'. The only exception is that of the book entitled 'Shivaji and the Maratha Art of War' written by Dr. M.B. Deopujari, which attempts to view Shivaji's various battles in the light of general principles of war.

In the present thesis an humble attempt has been made to study the first Anglo-Maratha War from the military point of view. While doing this, the author is aware of his limitations. He can hardly enter into the scientific and technical aspects of this war. He has to confine himself

only to the military history of the War.

A number of historical personalities and geographical places have figured in the war under study. Their names have been spelt in the present work as per their original pronunciations in Marathi, viz. Badoda (Baroda), Sashti (Salsette), Vasai (Bassein), Shinde (Sindia), etc. So far as the names of the British persons associated with the first Anglo-Maratha War are concerned, the spellings given in the original English records are followed viz. Captain Steuart (not Stuart).

In the preparation of this work, I am particularly indebted to Dr. A.R. Kulkarni, my supervisor, whose friendly and able guidance at every stage of the work helped me a lot.

The Deccan College, Pune, not only granted me a scholarship, but also allowed me to use its Archives. The authorities of the Pune Archives, Pune, the Bharat Itihas Samshodhak Mandal, Pune, the Maharashtra State Archives, Bombay, and the Jijamata Museum, Bombay, allowed me to avail myself of their original historical records and books. I am grateful to all these institutes.

My thanks are also due to Shri Gopalrao Ketkar of Malanggad and Shri Vamanrao Oak of Thane,who allowed me to make use of the valuable Modi papers in their possession. My friends Dr. P.N.Deshpande and Dr. P.L.Saswadkar accompanied me to the Malanggad fort. Dr. Deshpande took great pains in preparing the sketches of the Malanggad fort as well as the

map of the fort of Thane. I have made use of two maps from Prof. D.M.Wagh's unpublished thesis 'Geographical Factors in the Rise and Fall of the Marathas'. I am greatly indebted to all of them.

As the present work is related to the military history of a war, I had to take help of some retired men from the military service. Among them are Major General Y.S.Paranjape, Lt.Col. H.V.Dikshit and Lt.Col.M.G.Abhyankar. Shri Paranjape kindly allowed me to make use of his unpublished article 'The Military Traditions of the Marathas'. Shri Dikshit supplied me with some valuable books on military subjects. The discussions which I had with Shri Abhyankar proved to be very instructive and informative. I am thankful to all the three.

I would be failing in my duties if I do not thank my friends, colleagues and well-wishers in the Deccan College. Dr. G.T.Kulkarni and Dr. P.L.Saswadkar encouraged me in the preparation of my thesis. Shri P.R.Kulkarni helped me in making the photographs of the forts of Malanggad and Vasai. Shri S.K.Kulkarni prepared 17 out of 19 maps which have been included in the present thesis.

I am also obliged to Shri R.P. Raje and his friend Shri Sant for preparing two maps relating to the second Borghat expedition.

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MRKantak
(M. R. Kantak)

Pune,
25th June, 1977.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Aitchison, Treaties	A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries, Ed. C.U.Aitchison.
A.L.	Aitihasika Lekha-Sangraha, Ed.V.V.Khare.
A.P.Y.	Aitihasika Patre Yadi Vagaire, Ed. G.S.Sardesai, Y.M.Kale and V.S.Vakaskar.
B.I.S.M.	Bharat Itihas Samshodhak Mandal, Pune.
B.M. Add. Mss.	British Museum Additional Manuscripts.
Bom.Sec.Cons	Bombay Secret Consultations.
C.P.C.	Calendar of Persian Correspondence.
D.C.H.C.	Deccan College Historical Collection.
D.I.B.	Dictionary of Indian Biography, Ed. C.E.Buckland.
D.N.B.	Dictionary of National Biography.
F.D.S.C.	Foreign Department Secret Consultations.
Forrest, Foreign Department	Selections from the State Papers preserved in the Foreign Department of India, Ed. G.W.Forrest.
Forrest, M.S.	Selections from the State Papers preserved in the Bombay Secretariat, Vol.I, Maratha Series, Ed. G.W.Forrest.
H.P.M.S.	Historical Papers relating to Mahadaji Sindia, Ed. G.S.Sardesai.
I.H.R.C.	Indian Historical Records Commission Proceedings.
M.D.D.	Military Department Diary (Maharashtra State Archives).

M.I.S.	Marathyanchya Itihasachi Sadhane, Ed. V.K.Rajwade.
Moor, A Narrative	A Narrative of the Operations of Captain Little's Detachment, and of the Mahratta Army, commanded by Purseram Bhow during the Late Confederacy in India against the Nawab Tippoo Sultan Bahadur, by Edward Moor.
P.A., P.S.R.	Pune Archives, Papers Selected for Research.
P.D.D.	Political Department Diary (Maharashtra State Archives).
Pechells: An Historical Account	An Historical Account of the Settlement and Possession of Bombay by the English East India Company and of the Rise and Progress of the War with the Mahratta Nation, by Samuel Pechells.
Peshwa Diaries	Selections from the Satara Rajas' and Peshwas' Diaries.
P.T.	Parasnis Transcripts (Pune Archives).
R:B:L	Rumal: Bundle: Letter.
R:F:L	Rumal: File: Letter
S.P.D.	Selections from the Peshwa Daftar, Ed. G.S. Sardesai.
S.P.D.D.	Secret and Political Department Diary (Maharashtra State Archives).

CHAPTER I

I N T R O D U C T I O N

The first Anglo-Maratha War is one of the most important events of the 18th century from the point of view of history of India in general and of the Marathas in particular. It covers the period of about a decade after the murder of Narayanrao Peshwa in August 1773. The war was precipitated by the political asylum offered by the British to Raghunathrao Peshwa alias Raghoba at Surat and the wanton British attack on the fort of Sashti (Salsette) in December, 1774. These two actions of the British led to a chain of some major battles and minor encounters between the Marathas and the British, which were fought on a very wide area in Malawa, Gujarat and Maharashtra (Konkan and Khandesh). These battles and encounters constitute what is known as the first Anglo-Maratha War.

The native powers like the Nizam and Haidar Ali were dragged into the War at a later stage, but the roles they played in it were subsidiary. The main contenders were the Marathas and the British. The War which started in December 1774, ended with the treaty of Salbai in 1783.

Every war has two main aspects, political (diplomatic) and military. So far, the political (diplomatic) aspect of the first Anglo-Maratha War has been exhaustively studied

by two scholars, Dr. Shanti Prasad Varma and Dr. Shailendra Nath Sen. While the former's book entitled 'A Study in Maratha Diplomacy' analyses mainly the diplomatic aspect of the first Anglo-Maratha War, giving secondary importance to the military aspect, the latter has concentrated only on its political aspect in his book 'Anglo-Maratha Relations During the Administration of Warren Hastings, 1772-1785'. Consequently, the works of both the scholars are replete with minute details of political events as well as diplomatic moves and countermoves covering a wide area from Malawa in the North to Karnatak in the South.

The present thesis radically differs from the above two works in its approach to the subject under study. It mainly deals with the military aspect of the first Anglo-Maratha War, which is yet to be studied. It attempts to give a picture of the War as it was fought on the battlefields rather than on political and diplomatic fronts. Therefore, it studies in detail the day-to-day movements and actions of the Maratha and British armies on different battlefields from the military point of view, taking into consideration the strategy and tactics adopted by the Maratha and British commanders. In other words, it tries to view the first Anglo-Maratha War as an art and technique of warfare. It refers to the political and diplomatic issues of the War very briefly wherever absolutely necessary. Thus it may be said that the present work is

complementary to the earlier works of Dr. S.P. Varma and Dr. S. N. Sen.

In the present work, six battles, five of them fought in the Konkan region of Maharashtra and one that took place in Gujarat have been selected for study. The other military operations during the course of the War in Malawa, Gujarat, Orissa and Karnatak have not been taken into consideration for some specific reasons. Firstly, the present work being confined only to the battles between the Marathas and the British, the encounters between the latter and Haidar Ali in Karnatak, are beyond its scope. Secondly, most of the encounters between the Marathas and the British in Malawa, Orissa and Gujrat (except the battle of Adas) are not major military operations worth independent study. They are supplementary to the major battles in the Konkan region, which were desperately fought by the two contestants for controlling Pune (Poona), the capital of the Marathas. Thirdly, whatever information is available regarding these supplementary minor military operations in the historical records, has been sufficiently discussed by Dr. S.P. Varma in his book. It is needless to repeat the same.

The present work is divided into following nine chapters.

Chapter I discusses critically all the published and unpublished source-material on the first Anglo-Maratha

War and the new information it has brought to light.

Chapter II makes a brief comparison between the military traditions and systems of the Marathas and the British prior to the ~~final~~ first Anglo-Maratha War, which affected their respective modes of warfare during the War.

Chapters III to VII divide the War into three phases and make a military study of the battles and sieges given below:

Chapter III - Siege and capture of Sashti (Thane) fort and the battle of Adas (1774-1775).

Chapter IV - First Borghat Expedition and the battle of Talegao (1778-1779).

Chapter V - Siege of Malanggad (1780).

Chapter VI - Siege and capture of Vasai (Bassein) fort (1780).

Chapter VII - Second Borghat Expedition (1781).

Chapter VIII - gives a fresh treatment to the Treaty of Salbai. It makes a critical analysis of the important clauses of the treaty from the military point of view, emphasizing a comparative study of the roles of Nana Phadnis and Mahadaji Shinde in the conclusion of the treaty.

Chapter IX - makes a comparative study of all the three phases of the War, leading to certain generalisations and observations regarding the War as a whole in the light of universally accepted Principles of War.

Sources of Information

The present thesis is mainly based on original unpublished Marathi sources which have not been consulted so far in any of the earlier works on the first Anglo-Maratha War. It has attempted not only to bring new facts to the surface with the help of these new Marathi sources, but also to treat the entire episode in a new perspective as has been shown in the earlier part of this chapter. The Marathi records are supplemented by various other published and unpublished records.* In consulting all these records, the emphasis has been laid on military rather than political details.

Dr. Varma and Dr. Sen, by relying primarily on English records, have discussed the War in their works from the British point of view. The present work, however, by emphasizing the Marathi records, has tried to explain the course of the War from the native (Maratha) point of view without in any way neglecting the British view point or minimising the importance of English records. The purpose behind this is to give a comprehensive and more balanced picture of the War under study.

The unpublished Marathi sources brought to light for the first time in this thesis are as follows:

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* A list of these records is given in the Bibliography at the end of the present thesis.

(A) Unpublished Marathi records in the Deccan College Archives, Pune

The Archives of the Deccan College, Pune, was formerly a private collection of the late Mr. D.B. Parasnis, a well-known collector of historical material and a historian of the Marathas. The main bulk of the Parasnis Collection, comprising nearly 25,000 loose Marathi papers, and documents in Modi script, arranged in 101 Rumals, was the official record of Nana Phadnis, known as the Menavali Collection. This Collection contains thousands of newsletters sent by Nana's agents-cum-spies from various quarters in India as well as the correspondence of Nana Phadnis himself, the Shindes, the Holkars, the Bhonsales of Nagpur, the Nizam, Haidar Ali, Tipu, the Peshwas, the Chhatrapatis and so on, covering the period 1772-1800. Therefore, it is very useful for the study of political, social and military history of the Marathas during the latter half of the 18th century.

In the present work, more than a thousand Marathi papers from Rumal Nos. 48, 49, 52, 53, 80, 84, 89, 90 and 100 in the Menavali Collection have been consulted. Out of these Rumals, Rumal No. 80 is specially related to the first Anglo-Marathi War and is very important.

The papers from all the above mentioned Rumals are in the nature of day-to-day reports of what happened on different battle-fields and in various military quarters. They may be

classified as: (1) Newsletters sent by Nana's commanders like Haripant Phadke, Parashurambhau Patwardhan, Balaji Vishwanath Phatak, Bajipant Anna Joshi and many others to Nana, (2) Newsletters by Nana's civil officers like Gangadhar Ram Karlekar, Govind Ram Karlekar, etc. to Nana, (3) Spy-reports sent to Nana, Haripant Phadke and Parashurambhau Patwardhan by their agents-cum-spies, (4) Mutual correspondence between Nana's commanders and officers, (5) Jabānīs i.e. statements or confessions made by the prisoners of war. As all these newsletters were sent by persons who were either direct participants in or indirectly associated with different military operations of the first Anglo-Maratha War, they can be treated as most authentic. Most of these letters are original and properly dated. This enhances their authencity and value. A special feature of these newsletters is that their writers seldom exaggerate. They describe events and situations as they are. They very often express their introspective tendencies by boldly admitting their weaknesses as well as mistakes.

The above news-letters pertain to the period from 1779 to 1782. As they throw new light on the third or last phase of the first Anglo-Maratha War, they are extremely valuable in studying the military activities of the Marathas during that phase. They furnish rich information regarding routes of march, tactics, strategy, manoeuvres, deployment of forces, mode of warfare, logistics,

arms and weapons, economic conditions, espionage system, theatre of war, etc. in connection with the Maratha armies. They also describe the military movements and tactics of the British forces. They sometimes give graphic descriptions of the actual fighting between the Marathas and the British in various battles. In short, they are like military diaries of the Maratha commanders and officers.

The Deccan College Archival records have brought to surface some new events, incidents and personalities in relation to the first Anglo-Maratha War. These are enumerated below:

(1) Siege of Malanggad (August 1780 to November 1780)

The siege of Malanggad by the British from August 1780 to November 1780 is an unknown incident in the Maratha history brought to light by the Deccan College records. Malanggad is ten miles away from Kalyan(a town and port which is situated on the Pune-Bombay road) and is a centre of pilgrimage for the Hindus, Muslims and Christians alike. It has never figured in Maratha history so far. Grant Duff, mainly relying on the English records, has discussed the British attack on Malanggad in two pages only.* The reasons seem to be obvious: Firstly, the English records make only a brief reference to the Malanggad incident. Secondly, it may be argued that the British letter-writers

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* History of the Mahrattas, Vol. II, pp. 123-124.

did not like to describe in detail their discomfiture at the hands of the Marathas during the siege of the fort.

There are about forty-five Modi letters from Rumal No. 80 which are exclusively related to the Malanggad siege. Captain Abbington stormed the fort in August 1780 and blockaded it for four months. The Maratha garrison, under the command of Pandurang Sumbhaji Ketkar, the commandant of the fort, gallantly repulsed three British assaults and finally compelled them to raise the siege. The whole episode is so graphically and in such apt language described in the Marathi papers concerned that it would not be an exaggeration to say that there are hardly any Marathi documents comparable to them. The frank criticism of the defects of the Maratha armies such as lack of mobility, low morale, heterogeneous character, inefficiency of the Gardis and Rohillas in mountain warfare, disunity among the Maratha commanders; vivid descriptions of torrential rains in the thick of fight, acute economic crisis in the Maratha camp, etc. are worth reading. Chapter V of the present thesis is fully devoted to the siege of Malanggad.

(2) Capture of Kalyan, Belapur and Persik

New information regarding the attack and capture of Kalyan, Belapur and Persik forts in May 1780 is available in some of the papers from Rumal No. 80. This new information is given at the beginning of Chapter V.

(3) New information regarding the siege of Vasai fort (December 1780)

More than fifty papers from Rumal Nos. 80 and 48 are related to the siege of Vasai fort by Brigadier General Goddard in December, 1780. These papers have brought to light new encounters between the Marathas and the British near Kalyan, Badalapur and Neral on the Pune-Bombay Road as well as at Padaghe and Dugad in the Thane district. They also furnish new details about the battle of Vajreshwari and the blockade of Vasai fort. The information regarding the rescue operation of the Vasai fort under the command of Ramchandra Ganesh Kanade and Bajipant Anna Joshi is new and interesting. All this information enables us to visualise the whole plan envisaged by Nana Phadnis for the defence of the Vasai fort. Chapter VI discusses all the above facts.

(4) Second Borghat Expedition (1781-82)

More than a hundred Modi papers from Rumal Nos. 80, 90, 48 and 54 give daily reports regarding the second Borghat expedition under the command of Brigadier General Goddard. These papers have brought to light for the first time encounters between the Maratha and British troops at Kalyan, Sonale and Badlapur. Further, they provide interesting new information about the systematic retreat of the Maratha forces from Vajreshwari to the Borghat, their camps at different places, the Maratha tactics to thwart

the movements of Colonel Hartley, plans of Bajipant Joshi and Haripant Phadke to rescue the fort of Kohaj in Thane district, Nana's military plan to force Goddard retreat from the Borghat, scorched earth policy and the ganimī tactics of the Marathas to harass Goddard's troops, privations and hardships brought by the Maratha tactics in Goddard's camp, etc. The most interesting part is the Jabānīs, i.e. statements or confessions of the prisoners of war and the spy reports which give a good idea about the espionage system of the Marathas.

It is supposed that the fighting between the Maratha and the British forces came to an end in the Konkan region after Goddard's retreat from the Borghat. The Deccan College records disprove this belief. They have brought to surface for the first time a minor counter-offensive launched by the Marathas under the command of Balaji Vishwanath Phatak, which lasted for nearly a year after the retreat of Goddard. During this counter-offensive, Balaji Vishwanath inflicted defeats on the British forces at Manor, on the banks of the Surya river and at Mahim. He also recaptured the forts of Takmak, Asheri, Tandulwadi, Kaladurg, Gambhirgad and Shegwa in the Thane District from the British. The English records make only brief references to all these incidents. The reason may be that the British commanders and officers did not think them to be so important

as to note their particulars.

We come across in the Marathi papers relating to the second Borghat expedition, the earliest reference to the presence of Pendharis in the camps of Monsieur Noronha,* Tukoji Holkar and Parashurambhau Patwardhan. No such references are found in the Marathi records related to the period prior to the War. So it may be said that the first entry of the Pendharis in the Maratha armies took place during the first Anglo-Maratha War, and not at the end of the 18th century, as is currently believed.

All the above facts are discussed in Chapter VII.

(5) Role of new personalities

The Deccan College records have brought to light more than forty new personalities whose role during the first Anglo-Maratha War was unknown so far. Among these new personalities, the prominent are Pandurang Sambhaji Ketkar, Gangadhar Ram and Govind Ram Karlekar (brothers), Kashipant, Ragho Vishwanath Godbole, Balaji Vishwanath Phatak, Ramrao Narayan Deshmukh, Pandurangpant Godbole, etc. The new achievements of well-known persons like Haripant Phadke, Bajipant Anna Joshi, Parashurambhau Patwardhan, Ramchandra Ganesh Kanade, Monsieur Noronha, Tukoji Holkar, Bhavani Shivram, Sakharampant and Vishwasrao Panse, etc.

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* A Portuguese officer in the artillery department of the Peshwa during the first Anglo-Maratha War.

during the War are also highlighted by the records concerned.

(6) Geographical places and sites

While describing the course of the War, the Deccan College unpublished records as well as the other published Marathi and English sources have mentioned a number of geographical places and sites which have figured for the first time in Maratha history. All these places and sites, giving an idea of the Theatre of War in every battle under study, are shown in the maps and plans incorporated in the present work. Also the Marathi names of the different bastions of the forts of Thane (Sashti) and Vasai have been identified for the first time by visiting these places [See Plan Nos. 5 and 15 at the beginning of chapters III and VI respectively].

(B) Unpublished Marathi records in the Pune Archives

The Pune Archives is a name recently given to the State Records of the Bombay Government preserved at Pune, which was formerly known as the Peshwa Daftar or the Alienation Office. It is a rich repository of lakhs of Marathi and English papers and documents which furnish useful information about the political, social and economic conditions of Maharashtra in the 18th century and the early British period. Originally, it comprised the records of the Peshwas of the period 1729-1817. Subsequently, there were many other additions of English, Marathi and Persian

records to it. Out of this vast source-material, the papers which are consulted in the present thesis are given below:

(1) Selected Papers for Research

The late Riyasatkar G.S. Sardesai and his colleagues, while they were engaged in the work of publishing the Peshwa Daftar volumes, selected about 30,000 papers from the Chitnisi correspondence. A good number of papers from this group were published in the forty five volumes of the Peshwa Daftar series. The remaining have been arranged according to the regimes of the Peshwas and are kept open for study along with the originals of the published papers. This separate section is known as the section of "Selected Papers for Research".

About two hundred papers from the above section are consulted in this work. They are supplementary to the Deccan College Records as they give some additional useful information regarding the sieges of the forts of Sashti, Malanggad and Vasai and the British attack on Kalyan. They are also useful in the study of the social and economic aspects of the first Anglo-Maratha War, especially the economic crisis in the Maratha camps and social disruption caused by the plundering in which the Marathas indulged.

(2) Parasnis transcripts of Chitnisi Papers

The late Mr. D.B.Parasnis had got copied more than two thousand transcripts of papers from the Chitnisi

Correspondence. Some of these were incorporated in the published Peshwa Daftar volumes and out of the remaining ones, those found authentic and valuable were bound in volumes. These bound volumes are available for study at present to the scholars. However, it is very difficult to trace the originals of the transcripts incorporated in them, as Parasnis has not mentioned their original references.

The Parasnis transcripts (about 20) which are consulted in the present work, are supplementary to the letters published in the Peshwa Daftar volume 36.

(3) Papers from the Section 'Pāgās', 'Pathakās', etc.

A few papers from the section 'Pāgās', 'Pathakās', etc. i.e. lists of infantry and cavalry officers and soldiers in different units of the Maratha army, give items of income and expenditure during the first Anglo-Maratha War. They are useful in giving a fairly good picture of the military organization of the Marathas.

(C) Unpublished Marathi papers relating to the Ketkar family of Malanggad

Family records is a valuable source in Maratha history. During the first Anglo-Maratha War, Pandurang Sambhaji Ketkar was in charge of the Malanggad fort. The present members of the Ketkar family at present reside at the village named Bandhanwadi, which is situated at the foot of the Malanggad hill. They still enjoy the traditional

hereditary right to worship the Darga of Haji Malang Bawa on the Malanggad hill.

The author of the present work visited the residential place of the Ketkar family, examined some Marathi papers (in Modi script) in possession of that family and got copied eight valuable papers. These papers are very useful in preparing a genealogy of the Ketkar family. This genealogy is given in the Appendix at the end of Chapter V.

(D) Original Marathi Map of the first Borghat Expedition of 1778-79

The importance of maps and plans in the military study of a war can hardly be exaggerated. It is regretting to note that the Marathas, inspite of their involvement in a number of military operations, did not develop the art of cartography on scientific basis. However, a few crude maps drawn by them are available. One such map preserved in the Deccan College Archives is consulted in the present work. This is an original contemporary map drawn by a Maratha cartographer whose name is not known. A ~~photo~~ sketch of this map is given in Chapter IV. This map is related to the first Borghat Expedition (1778-1779). It gives the respective positions of the Maratha and the British troops in the vicinity of the Borghat. It cannot match the

contemporary British or French maps which are drawn according to the scientific principles of cartography. Even so, it is useful, as it gives an idea of the limited geographical knowledge of the Marathas in the 18th century.

Apart from all the above mentioned Marathi sources, there is one original unpublished English source, which has been consulted for the first time in this work. It is Captain Dickinson's Report.

(E) Captain Dickinson's Report

Captain Dickinson's Report on the forts in north Konkan was prepared in 1818. This Report has been preserved in the Maharashtra State Archives, Bombay, which was formerly known as the old Secretariat Records Office, in the Military Department Diary No. 314. After conquerring the Maratha kingdom in 1818, the East India Company appointed Captain Dickinson to make a thorough survey of all the forts in north Konkan with a view to dismantling those which would prove stratigically useful to the Marathas if they decided to revolt against the British to recapture their lost territories.

Dickinson's Report gives minute geographical details regarding all the important hill-forts and land-forts in north Konkan and their surrounding territories. This Report has been copiously used in the present work in describing the forts of Sashti (Thane), Vasai and Malanggad and preparing plans regarding the same.

Photographs, Maps and Plans

In the present thesis, the author has made an attempt to make a survey-study of some of the important geographical places connected with the first Anglo-Maratha War, which are mentioned in the original historical records. He visited places like Talegao, Vadgao, Borghat, Kalyan and the forts of Sashti, Thane, Vasai and Malanggad and took some photographs. Also on the basis of his observations of the above places as well as the geographical details as gleaned from the original sources consulted for the present study, he prepared maps and plans of every battle under study, showing the Theatre of War, routes of march of the two contending armies as well as deployment of the troops on both sides on the battle-grounds.

The above mentioned photos, maps and plans are incorporated in Chapters III to VII.

Glossary of Military Terms

A glossary of important military terms in Marathi appearing in the original unpublished Marathi records consulted in the present work is given in an Appendix on pages 390-397. This glossary should add to the value of the present study.

CHAPTER II

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE EVOLUTION AND GROWTH OF THE MARATHA AND BRITISH MILITARY SYSTEMS PRIOR TO THE FIRST ANGLO-MARATHA WAR

The first Anglo-Maratha War essentially represents a clash between two civilizations whose approach towards life basically differed from each other. Consequently, while the Marathas, with their conservative and traditional outlook, were in the mediaeval stage of development of the art of warfare, the British, who had cultivated scientific outlook towards every aspect of human life on account of the revolutionary changes brought about by Renaissance, Reformation and Industrial Revolution in Europe, were on the way to modernise their art and techniques of warfare on the eve of the first Anglo-Maratha War. It would be, therefore, interesting to analyse the military traditions of the two belligerent parties before entering into a detailed military study of the various phases of the War.

The expression 'military tradition' has a wider meaning than the customary preference of a people for military service or a sum total of their valiant deeds. It includes the contribution the people have made to the art and science of war, the weapons and techniques they have evolved, the organisational ability they have displayed as well as their

achievements in the furtherance of the political aims of their nation.[1]

It is a widely accepted fact now, barring some exceptions, that the Marathas were not mere plunderers and raiders, that keeping some political ideal in view they evolved a mode of warfare which was their own and which suited their temperament as well as the natural circumstances in which they were brought up. It is very difficult to trace the origin and determine the nature of the military traditions of the Marathas prior to the period of Shivaji on account of lack of sufficient evidence. As early as in the middle of the 7th century, the famous Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang described the people of Maharashtra as "proud, spirited and warlike".[2] Later in the 12th and 13th centuries, cavalry troops from the region, then known as the rāuts, fought in the service of various kings in the Deccan such as the Hoyasalas and those of the Vijayanagar empire. The Yadavas of Devagiri who were undisputedly of Maratha origin, were the first to hold their sway over most of the Marathi-speaking areas.

The Yadavas were not able to withstand the onslaught of Ala-ud-din Khalji, the first Muslim ruler to penetrate into the Deccan at the end of the 13th century. The complete collapse of the Yadavas, even though their forces outnumbered those of Ala-ud-din, may be attributed to their outmoded technique of warfare as compared to the swift and mobile

cavalry charges of the ~~Delhi~~ Sultan. The Turkish avalanche swept off, like the Yadava kingdom, other Hindu kingdoms of southern India in a surprisingly short time.

The alien domination destroyed all but the cultural cohesion of the Maratha society and various Marathas chieftains, who had taken fefuge in the mountainous tracts of Maharashtra to retain a semblance of authority, submitted to the rule of the Sultans of Delhi. The rule of the Sultans of Delhi was set aside in the Deccan by the establishment of the Bahamani kingdom in 1347. The Bahamani rulers continued for a long time the employment of the Brahmins, Marathas and Prabhus in their services.[3] The subsequent break-up of the Bahamani kingdom into five independent kingdoms or Shahis created favourable conditions for the rapid rise of leading Maratha families like the Shirkes, Daphales, Nimbalkars, Mahadiks, Mores, Bhonsales, Jadhavs and the Brahmins like Murar Jagdev and Dadaji Kondadev who found ample scope for their military and administrative talent in the service of the Shahis, especially the Nizamshahi, the Adilshahi and the Qutabshahi.

At the opening of the seventeenth century, Mughal imperialism from north India posed a threat to the very existence of the Muslim kingdoms in the Deccan. The ensuing struggle between the Mughal power and the Deccani kingdoms as well as the internal feuds and dissentions amongst the various local Muslim parties in the Adilshahi, Nizamshahi and

Qutbshahi courts helped the rise of the Maratha chieftains. The rulers of the Deccani kingdoms had no other alternative but to rely on the loyalty and bravery of the Maratha sardars and jahgirdars. Malik Amber, the loyal vazir of the Nizam Shah, introduced a novel method to prevent the invader from the North from destroying the Nizamshahi. He avoided open pitched battles with the Mughal army which had powerful park of artillery and cavalry. He organized parties of lightly armed Maratha troopers to harass the Mughal lines of communication. The Maratha bārgīr (footman) attracted the attention of the Mughal Emperor Jahangir on account of his skill in such operations. After Ambar's death, Shahaji Bhonsale, Shivaji's father, who had received the lessons in the new method of warfare under the leadership of Malik Amber, rose to prominence in the Nizamshahi court and strained every nerve to save that kingdom from the clutches of the Mughal power.

The Marathas reaped much benefits as they served the Hindu kings of Vijayanagar and did not hesitate to offer their services to the Muslim rulers of different dynasties and races. They became thoroughly acquainted with the defects of the traditional Hindu mode of warfare and the points of superiority of the Muslim art of fighting. They were much impressed by the bold offensive strategy of Ala-ud-din and his lieutenants, their discipline, the rapid

manoeuvres of horse archers and the religious zeal of the warriors of Islam. They also witnessed the effective use of the Kazāgī[4] mode of offensive of the combined moves of artillery and cavalry by the Mughals. The Muhammedans had introduced several improvements in fort architecture. The use of lime and mortar as the cementing medium, construction of gates with iron pikes, sidewalls with embrasures for the use of musketeers, provision of earthen glacis, cannon platforms and towers at strategic points were, among others, innovations calculated to render siege warfare a specialised art.[5] The employment of Portuguese and Turkish gunners for casting cannon pieces had become common. The siege weapons of the day made the task of reducing strong forts difficult. The Sultans built or repaired forts on the flat-topped hills of the Sahyadri. The Marathas being at home in the hills, their services in reducing such forts by strategems were valued. The Maratha fighting class, who was in the employment of the Muslim rulers for quite a long time, imbibed the new discipline of arms and fighting technique.[6]

It can thus be said that from about 1350 to 1650 the Marathas continued as mercenaries, offering their swords as well as their pens to the highest bidders. This period served as a kind of apprenticeship for them to learn the contemporary art of warfare and civil administration. They did not care much who ruled over them, so long as they

could enjoy the benefits of their loyal services. The realisation of their error struck them only when Shivaji converted a number of them to accept the idea of Swarajya. What they had learnt under the Muslim regimes was to prove very useful in the foundation of Swarajya.

It is almost an axiom that use of force or war is the ultimate means by a nation to achieve its political aim. Logically, therefore, the aim of war and the strategy resorted to must be such as to facilitate the attainment of the political aim. But the strategy followed is subject to the size and organization of the available forces, their weapons and training, the terrain and geographical surroundings in which the military operations are conducted as also the characteristics of the enemy. To raise, equip and train forces to meet the likely enemies calls for a discerning vision and careful planning during periods of peace.

Shivaji was a born leader of men. He provided the moral basis for the struggle against the Muslims and other powers by keeping before the Marathas the noble ideal of the protection of Swarajya and Swadharma which appealed to the innermost emotions of the people of Maharashtra. Militant Islam gave the Muslims a will to fight and conquer which, the Hindus, socially divided and politically disunited, lacked. It goes to the credit of Shivaji that he brought the masses into the picture and appealed to their

patriotic feelings.

Shivaji knew well that he could not face the well-trained, regular big armies of the Mughals and the Deccani Muslim powers in the open plains of the Desh on the eastern side of the Sahyadri mountain. He, therefore, decided to expand his inherited jahgir of Pune, Supe and Chakan into the difficult mountainous and hilly regions of the Konkan and the Ghats and to build a small but secure base for himself. Normally he avoided open fights with the enemy forces, but when was compelled to, he lured them into the difficult hills and jungles of his own choosing within his base, caught them at a disadvantage and routed them. He thus followed three of the now recognised Principles of War - security, mobility and surprise.[7]

Having secured suitable bases of operations, Shivaji, in the latter part of his life, switched on to the offensive which by its many-sidedness and superior mobility baulked the enemy's concentration of strength. As a matter of fact, the Mughal commanders failed to develop their offensive strategy in the face of Maratha opposition. Shivaji struck at their bases, outposts and centres of trade with such celerity that the most energetic among them were compelled to stand guard and follow his columns from one point to another. The moral effect far outweighed the material. Thus Shivaji's strength lay in his grand strategy. In the field of logistical strategy he stands apart and far above

his contemporaries. He did not march directly to meet the foe but secured his communications and looked to the safety of his home-base. It was due to his weak artillery department that Shivaji preferred mobile to positional warfare. This aspect of warfare was very much neglected by the Hindus before him and in their traditional positional warfare too, the swift flank and rear attacks of the select bodies of Turkish cavalry prevailed over numbers moving in a dense mass. In a battle, as in a wrestling match, preparatory moves tend to produce success. This was the main principle of Shivaji, the essence of his art. Besides, sudden raids, sweeps and ambushes on the enemy, use of psychological pressure as in the case of attack on Shaista Khan, use of different plans for his escapes from Panhalagad and Agra to keep the enemy off the guard, etc. show that Shivaji was not attached to any particular mode or modes of warfare. Always calculating and never rash, he found the most practicable method of confounding his enemies suitable to particular circumstances.

Shivaji aimed at having under his command all the three arms - infantry, cavalry and artillery - in adequate strength. According to Sabhasad, the contemporary chronicler of Shivaji, Shivaji's infantry contained 1,00,000 men - Hashams and Mavales and the Paga of 45,000 Bargirs. The artillery arm was being built up and had not reached full development at the time of Shivaji's death. If the organization be an

index to a commander's aim and ideas, it can be safely asserted that Shivaji was training his people for a regular war by building up a regular state army. Mere predatory activities of plundering and looting was not his aim. In the 18th century, after the introduction of powerful fire-arms by the Europeans, the infantry got preponderance over cavalry. But Shivaji realised the importance of infantry a century earlier. He was the first to appreciate the potentialities of the Mavales among whom he had spent his childhood. The Mavale infantry was the backbone of his power. Karnataki Telangi musketeers were also recruited in his infantry. Mobile cavalry was used as a support for well-trained infantry. Shivaji's infantry was not trained on the pattern followed by the contemporary European nations. It followed the norms and rules of discipline laid down by Shivaji himself.

The discussion of Shivaji's contribution to the art of Maratha warfare would not be complete without a reference to his organization of forts and navy. Shivaji is rightly described as a man of forts. He is the first man in India, perhaps in the world, to make the maximum use of land-forts, hill-forts and sea forts to establish an independent kingdom and defend it. That he had mastered the art of fort architecture is demonstrated by the construction of the Sindhudurg fort and the renovation of the fort of Gingee. Friere, a Jesuit missionary, who was contemporary of Shivaji, has



praised Shivaji's renovation of the Gingee fort.[8]

Shivaji was the first mediaeval Indian ruler who laid the foundation of state navy. Unlike the contemporary Muslim powers including the Mughals, he did not simply rely on land army. His navy was not as efficient and powerful as the navies of contemporary European powers and the Siddis. But it was strong enough to guard the western coastline of his Swarajya territory, give protection to his mercantile ships and strike terror in the hearts of the native powers. The Portuguese took cognizance of the naval dockyards Shivaji established at Kalyan, Bhiwandi and Panvel.[9]

So far as the science of warfare is concerned, Shivaji tried his best to achieve as much as he could. Still he had to rely on the Europeans for guns and cannon. But it goes to his credit that he not only imbibed what was good in the traditional Hindu and Muslim arts of warfare, but also introduced some innovations which suited the circumstances. What is more, he brought in personal element (i.e. qualities of a commander) in the art of fighting and raised the military art of the Marathas to a higher level. Further, he trained the Marathas to make every military operation a financial success. At the end of his life, his financial position was quite sound.[10]

The ideals of Swarajya and Swadharma cherished by Shivaji and the lessons he imparted in the art of warfare

continued to dominate the minds of the Maratha people even after his death. During Rajaram's period, the whole Maratha country came to be occupied by thousands of Mughal troops led by Emperor Aurangzeb himself. The wife and son of Sambhaji, Shivaji's son, were then in the Mughal custody. His brother Rajaram who assumed kingship of the Marathas remained for eight years under siege in Ginjee. The regular army of Shivaji and Sambhaji had scattered everywhere. Dhanaji Jadhav and Santaji Ghorpade, the two valiant commanders, had become arch enemies of each other. Despite these handicaps, the Marathas threw themselves wholeheartedly into the struggle, which became a people's war - a war to free the Maratha country from the Mughal occupation. Bands of irregular soldiers under their daring local leaders raided the enemy's rear, his supply lines and isolated posts. When they were chased by superior forces, every town and village gave them shelter. Aurangzeb's army was thus forced to scatter, to garrison the scores of captured forts, to occupy other strategic points, to escort commissariat and to encounter increasing number of raids on its camps.

The Maratha struggle against Aurangzeb during Rajaram's period and after him was guerilla warfare par excellence. It is the only instance of a successful guerilla war waged in India by any of her people against an oppressive ruler. This war of liberation waged by the Marathas was their invaluable contribution to the art of fighting. They

demonstrated to the world how to fight against all sorts of heavy odds. Their war can be compared with the American War of Independence and the Spanish War against Napolean. However, it must be remembered that the Marathas fought for their freedom much earlier than the Americans and the Spaniards. Also their struggle lasted for a longer period than that of the Americans and the Spaniards. Unlike the Americans and the Spaniards, the Marathas fought on their own without any help from outside.

The War of Liberation did free a large part of the Maratha country from the Mughal domination, but it also brought back the old feudal system. As there was no other way of compensating the military leaders for the services they were rendering, Rajaram had to promise them jahgirs, often within the territories occupied by the enemy. These promises of land-grants acted as challenges to the gallant commanders, "to kill the bear if they wanted to collect the skin." This policy resulted in the rise of a number of military commanders from different strata of society, whose military enterprises expanded the Maratha kingdom in a wide-spread area of north and south India within a short time. But it had its adverse effects too. The rapid expansion of the Maratha kingdom outside Maharashtra was possible only by the use of efficient and very mobile cavalry. Consequently, during the period of Peshwa Bajirao I and his successors, the infantry of hardy peasants, which was the

backbone of Shivaji's army and which combined brilliantly with the mobile cavalry units of Santaji Ghorpade and Dhanaji Jadhav to give them dazzling victories over Aurangzeb during the War of Liberation, was relegated to the background and the cavalry became the spear-heading instrument of the Maratha army.

Peshwa Bajirao I was a born cavalry leader. He scored victories over the Nizam in the battles at Palkhed in February 1728 and at Bhopal in December 1737 by brilliant cavalry manoeuvres. Field Marshal Montagomery considers Bajirao's victory at Palkhed as a 'masterpiece of strategic mobility'.[11] But the sad thing about Bajirao's triumphs is that they did neither enable him to annihilate the military might of his enemies nor were they financially rewarding. This was definitely a departure from Shivaji's policy, which proved detrimental to the Maratha State in the end. Reliance merely on cavalry was not enough for a state which embarked upon establishing an empire in India in the 18th century.

It is significant that the Peshwas and his officers sometimes remembered Shivaji's achievements, e.g. Peshwa Balaji Bajirao has written in one of his letters to Pilaji Jadhavrao, "We are 'ganimis', the disciples of Shivaji Maharaj."[12] After the defeat of the Marathas at Panipat, when the Maratha affairs were in a bad shape and Nizam Ali worked havoc in Pune, Sakharam Bapu Bokil wrote to Gopikabai,

Nanasaheb Peshwa's wife, "Ours is the way of the ganims. We should not surrender our territories to him (the Nizam) when we have fifty thousand troops".[13] These remarks clearly show that the successors of Shivaji in the Peshwa period thought that ganimī kāvā was the main principle of Shivaji's strategy and tactics. Whatever the original meaning of the words ganim [14] and kāvā[15], Balaji Bajirao and Sakharam Bapu understood ganimī kāvā to mean a kind of war waged when the enemy had the upper hand and when, in fact, they were unable to face him. Under such circumstances, the cavalry of the Peshwas cut off enemy supply-lines, ravaged and sometimes burnt down the surrounding territories, made encircling manoeuvres with a view to harassing the enemy forces and attacked his rear and both flanks without making a decisive engagement in the front. This was a negative type of fighting by which the Marathas could tire out and defeat their enemies in singular battles, but were never able to vanquish them in a war. Decisive results were not possible in such types of combats. This clearly shows that the Peshwas misunderstood Shivaji's Defensive Strategy. Shivaji remained on the defensive out of necessity before his escape from Agra. But in the defensive stage, though strategically he was on the defensive, tactically he was on the offensive, always ready to give a counter-blow to the enemy. Malharrao Holkar who did not realise this, was an ardent and consistent advocate of

ganimī kāvā tactics. 'If the head is safe, fifty crowns could be gained' was the watchword of his life.

Bajirao's brother Chimaji was much impressed by the disciplined infantry of the Portuguese during his battles against them. But the two brothers probably remained sceptical about its usefulness in the highly mobile warfare they were waging in those days.

By the middle of the 18th century, the political and military situation in India had changed. The expanded Maratha kingdom had to be held together and defended against not only the Mughals, the Nizam and other native powers like Haidar Ali, but also against a probable encroachment by the newly rising powers of the British and the French. Cavalry forces alone could not be expected to do so. The various battles fought between the English and the French on the Indian soil and the battles of Plassey and Baxar demonstrated a new way of warfare in which small but well-drilled, disciplined infantry and artillery units of the Europeans and the Indian sepoys completely dominated the vast hordes of horsemen of the native powers. Under such circumstances, the Maratha leaders should have gone all way in reviving the infantry units and training them properly without sacrificing the traditional mobility of their cavalry. It was also possible for them to prepare new mobile light field artillery along the lines of Haidar Ali, if not on the models of the Europeans, discarding their heavy, cumbersome old

artillery pieces.

Men like Peshwa Balaji Bajirao and his cousin brother, Sadashivrao Bhau, who were impressed by the western mode of fareware felt like doing something in reorganizing the Maratha army. But the other Maratha leaders, especially Malharrao Holkar, were so engrossed in and bound to the old Maratha tactics of ganimī kāvā, that the Peshwa did not go beyond hiring some non-Maratha mercenaries like Ibrahim Khan Gardi and Muzaffar Khan Gardi, who were trained by the French general Bussy. Peshwa Madhavrao I was a good administrator and commander, but as he was all the time engaged in facing the internal feuds and the external foes during his short reign of about a decade, he found very little time at his disposal to give a serious thought to the reorganization of his army. He scored his voctories against Haidar Alī by traditional Maratha methods of ganimī kāvā, when the latter also was adopting the same tactics. Haidar soon rectified his mistake and resorted to a new mode of warfare, which proved to be very effective. The Marathas, however, remained stagnant.

In sum, on the eve of the first Anglo-Maratha War, the Marathas had switched back to their old traditional mode of warfare instead of taking a leap forward.

When we compare the Maratha army with the British army on the eve of the first Anglo-Maratha War, we find that while the former was drifting backward, the latter was making a

gradual advance towards new methods of warfare. The British Army, which later on came to be known as Indian army, originated in small establishments of undisciplined and indifferently armed guards of peons. They were enrolled with the dual object of protecting the factories of the East India Company and lending dignity to its principal functionaries. These peons could hardly be regarded as soldiers. As trade was the main purpose of the Company, its authorities could hardly think in terms of raising up troops. However, as the factories grew in size and importance, the peons were given a semi-military organization. In time, they were formed into levies. Fort St. George was built in Madras in 1644 to house the Company's property securely. It was manned in 1645 by a body of Englishmen, French and Dutch deserters, Portuguese half-breeds and Negroes, who totalled about hundred men.[16] This was the nucleus of what till 1895 was called the Madras Army.

The next English centre was the Company's factory at Hugli. It was formed in 1652 under an Agent who was authorised by a farman of the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan to have an "ensign and thirty men" for his personal guard of honour. To this was added a small party of artillery men, called the "gunner and his crew". Such was the origin of the celebrated Bengal Army. In 1681, Bengal became independent of Madras and was placed under an "Agent and Governor in the Bay of Bengal and the factories subordinate".[17] In 1689

Calcutta became the focus of the Company's commercial activity in Bengal, and the Agent's guard was increased to hundred. Bengal was raised to the status of a Presidency in 1699, and Sir Charles Eyre was appointed its President.[18] The fort at Calcutta was named Fort William, in honour of King William III. The military force here amounted to some 130 men in 1708 apart from a small body of artillery men.[19]

Bombay was the next foothold acquired by the British in their chronological order of possession.[20] The small force sent out in 1662 to hold it for King Charles II, whose dowry it formed on his marriage with Catherine of Braganza, became the embryo of what in course of time grew to be the Bombay Army.[21] Around 1668 the garrison of Bombay consisted of twenty commissioned and non-commissioned officers, 124 privates, and 54 Topasses,[22] apart from 2 gunners and their 21 pieces of cannon. All the men were Europeans, except the Topasses, who were half-castes claiming descent from the Portuguese, and were so called from the form of the head-gear they used. This was the largest of the military bodies at that time in India, the forces in Bengal being then limited to an Ensign and 30 European soldiers.[23]

About the origin and growth of European troops, Major MacMunn writes as follows: "European companies were formed from detachments sent from England, from runaway sailors, men of disbanded French Corps, from Swiss and Hanoverians, from prisoners of war, and white material in search of a

livelihood. In 1748 the regular European corps of the Company's service, who now formed part of the British Line and the Royal Artillery, were first formed from these heterogeneous detachment and scattered companies.[24]

Indians were first enlisted and disciplined by the French, who made their appearance in the country in 1665 to compete for commercial gains. The other participants in the contest were the Portuguese and the Dutch. Differences between the Portuguese and the English had been smoothed over on the European plane, and there was no keen rivalry between them for Indian commerce. However, with the Dutch the British had to face keen commercial rivalry until 1759, when they scored a success over them at Chinsura (Bengal). The two principal contestants now left were the English and the French. There developed a struggle between them for mastery in southern India.[25] They changed over from the character of the peaceful traders into military contenders for supremacy in India. This gave birth to the concept of a regular army of Indians. In 1741 there existed in Bombay a kind of native militia, composed of 700 sepoys, including Native officers. They were not equipped or dressed in a uniform manner, but supplied their own weapons - swords and shields, bows and arrows, pikes, lances or matchlocks.[22] In Bengal, the Native element in the army was growing in unison with the pattern evolving elsewhere. The fall of Madras, which the French captured in 1746, seemed to have set the British

on a parallel course of forming and fashioning troops of Indians on the European model.[27]

The French in Madras were responsible for two important discoveries. The first was that the fire, whether of musketry or of field-pieces, of small disciplined bodies of men had so greatly improved that the larger forces of Indian rulers, and particularly their numerous but untrained horsemen, could be faced and attacked with impunity. This was first demonstrated by Paradis, a Swiss officer in command of a small French force, who defeated the army of the Nawab of Karnatak at San Thome near Madras in 1746.[28] The second discovery was that the native sepoys could be subjected to European discipline and thereby made more effective. It had always been believed in the past that they could not be disciplined, and indeed this was true of several of the classes from whom the Company's earliest sepoys were obtained because of their different religious ideas and caste considerations, reluctance to undergo European discipline and different ways of living. It was Dumas, the French Governor of Pondicherry, who proved that the ordinary Indian soldier could easily be taught to take his place in disciplined ranks. The lesson was quickly learnt, by the British, and by 1748, Stringer Lawrence, who is called the 'Father of the Indian Army', enrolled for the first time a Native force at Madras.[29]

Lawrence's excellent work was continued and improved

upon by Clive, who concentrated his attention on improving the Native troops. The Native style of equipment was discarded. Rohillas and Rajputs, who formed adventurist classes, were recruited in the Indian army. Clive shaped them into a battalion of sepoys and drilled, disciplined and clothed them on the European model.[30] "His great feat of capturing and defending Arcot in 1751 was performed with 200 European soldiers and 300 sepoys and the conduct of the latter proved how greatly their military spirit had improved under Clive."[31] These Native soldiers were instrumental in establishing the power of England in India by the battle of Plassey in Bengal (1757) and on the field of Wandewash in southern India (1760). After the battle of Plassey the Company's power grew very fast. The final overthrow of the French was completed in 1761, and their territories were reduced to a few settlements, the principal of which, Pondicherry, was captured in 1793.

Bombay was also developing its Native force on the lines of Bengal and Madras. It enlisted a congeries of Arabs, Abyssinians, Indian Muslims and Hindus.[32] They served as auxiliaries to the European battalions. At first they were organized, as in Bengal and Madras, in independent companies. But as in the other Presidencies, the important development of organizing them in battalions took place in 1767. "From independent companies commanded by Native Captains, to battalions with Native Commandants, supervised

by one or two British officers, the organization was successfully developed into one with European Commandants of Battalions and a subaltern to each company."

The officers' cadre was the least satisfactory part of the Indian Army. Some incidents of the French War, which terminated in 1748, particularly the fall of Madras, had taught the English Government and the Court of Directors several important lessons. The first was the necessity for the proper officering of their military forces in India. The higher command was least efficient, because in the absence of senior military officers, the command in all the Presidencies was placed in the hands of civilian members of Council, or of men who had left military service for another employment. The lower ranks of officers were composed, of broken or uneducated men, or at the best, of men who had passed through the ranks. In times of war, these men were supplemented by writers and other civilian officers of the Government who were hastily taken from their commercial work to command companies. With the glorious exception of Clive, and the lesser cases of Preston and Haliburton, it was natural enough that such men, however, gallant, did little as officers. These defects were remedied in and after 1748 by the appointment of experienced officers, from the King's service, to command, and by sending out young men of good class for the junior ranks. Thus a better source of recruitment was found, which helped to improve the quality of the

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rank and file in the Infantry and Artillery.[34]

The next reform was the formation of a separate branch of Artillery. From the earliest days of the Bombay Regiment, there had been a "Gun Room Crew" attached to it. The infantry battalions had also become accustomed in the military forces of the European nations in India to carry with them and to work with great effect small field pieces. For the proper working of heavier guns, however, better trained men were required. Consequently, in 1748, a separate company of Artillery was formed at Bombay, the first in the British Armies in India. It was formed mainly from the gunners and from the men of the twelve companies of Infantry, who had been sent from England.[35] The greatest and most essential reform, was, however, the introduction of a Mutiny Act in 1754 which prescribed trial by court martial for military offences by soldiers and officers.[36]

After the British had gained success against the French in India, their political ambitions soon grew to a high pitch and gradually they started building up their military strength, which would challenge the native powers for supremacy in India. Of the native powers, the Marathas were the strongest contenders, who were dreaming for extending their kingdom throughout the length and breadth of India ever since Chhatrapati Rajaram's period. Next to the Marathas came the formidable Haidar Ali and the astute Nizam. Keeping this in view, the British armies at Bombay, Madras and

Calcutta were slowly growing from strength to strength. In 1787, the Governor Lord Cornwallis, wrote to the Duke of York: "A brigade of our sepoys would make anybody Emperor of Hindustan. The appearance of the Native troops gave me the greatest satisfaction."[37] Of course it took thirty more years for the British to reach the stage of annhilating the Maratha power. But it can definitely be said that prior to the beginning of the first Anglo-Maratha War, the British acquired such military strength as was difficult for any of the native powers, including the Marathas, to crush on its own.

Like their mode of warfare, the military organization of the Marathas in the 18th century was different from the one in the 17th century. Chhatrapati Shivaji wielded all power over his Army and Navy. His soldiers and naval men were directly paid from the state treasury. He could not do away with the feudal system of grants of lands and fiefs, but he successfully controlled it. Only one third part of his cavalry consisted of Shiledars, who had to breed their own horses and raise their own troops. During the War of Liberation against Aurangzeb, the period of stress and strain compelled Rajaram to depart from Shivaji's policy of non-assignments of military fiefs. Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath continued Rajaram's policy. Soon the Maratha kingdom lost its homogeneity and became a heterogeneous unit held together by different Maratha jahgirdars and saranjamadars. After

the arrival of Shahu in 1707, the Peshwas rose to prominence. Till Shahu was alive, he was able to bring pressure on the Peshwa and other Maratha sardars and hold them in check. But after his death, the Chhatrapatis of Satara were relegated to the position of mere titular heads. The Peshwas became the civil and military chiefs of the Maratha empire. Upto the period of Peshwa Madhavrao I, the central government of Pune was strong enough not to allow any of the Maratha Jahgirdars take liberty with it. But once Peshwa Madhavrao I disappeared from the political scene of India and his successor brother Narayanrao was murdered, the affairs of Pune took a different turn. The family of the Peshwas lost its hold on the Maratha government and all power was concentrated in the hands of Nana Phadnis, who was a clerk in the Accounts Department of the Peshwas, and Mahadaji Shinde who was a good military commander and whose headquarters was at Gwalher. This indicates that the power of the Maratha Government was divided at two centres. Thus, on the eve of the first Anglo-Maratha War, the central government of the Marathas became weaker than before.

As compared to the Maratha military organization prior to the first Anglo-Maratha War, the British military organization was not better. The conduct of military operations by the three armies from their respective bases (at Bombay, Madras and Calcutta) and the acquisition of territory by each, gave rise to three separate administrations in India,

called the Presidencies of Bengal, Madras and Bombay. By the turn of the 17th century, the Presidencies had been definitely established.[38] They were independent of each other, answerable only to the Court of Directors at 'home' and with full sovereign rights within their own spheres, including the organization and disposal of their military forces, which had progressed, prior to the first Anglo-Maratha War, from a mere unorganized handful of ill-disciplined Europeans to a force consisting of small but organized military units. These armies had two portions each - the British and the Indian or Native. It was necessary to bring the armed forces of all the three Presidencies under one command, but before the first Anglo-Maratha War, this was not achieved.

It should be remembered that the naval power was the basis on which the British had built up their land power. The British nation was primarily a naval power which was engaged in trading activities. It is interesting to note that the first regular regiment of the British Army in India was raised only in 1660, forty-seven years after the establishment of the Navy in India. An humble beginning of the Indian Marine was made at Surat in 1613 when the nucleus of a naval force consisting of gurabs and gallivats was commissioned by the Company. The Marine steadily expanded. With the increasing facilities at Bombay and the advantage of an excellent sheltered harbour there, Surat was losing its importance. Therefore, in 1686, the Indian Marine came

to be based at Bombay and its force was redesignated as the Bombay Marine. It steadily expanded and by 1716 its Fleet was sizable. It had a 32-gun ship, four grab-ships, each mounting 20 to 28 guns, and twenty grabs and gallivats with guns ranging from 5 to 12 each. The whole force was under the command of Commodore Mathews, who was designated Commander-in-Chief of the Bombay Marine.[39]

The ships of the Bombay Marine were officered only by the Europeans but the complement of the crew was mixed and contained in some ships upto three-fourths of locally recruited sailors. The Bombay Marine, from its humble beginnings, gradually grew into a disciplined service and reached the stature of a small Navy, although its designation remained the same. It was assisted by the Royal Navy.[40] The Bombay Navy gave a good account of itself in fighting with the Portuguese and the Marathas on the west coast, assaulting Haidar Ali's ports on the Malabar coast and defending the merchantships of the East India Company against the pirates. It was the Bombay Marine which gave a death-blow to Tulaji Angre's navy in 1755-56. Thus prior to the first Anglo-Maratha War, the British Navy reigned supreme on the west coast ever ready to cooperate with the British army on any occasion.

As compared to the growth of the British navy in India, the Maratha naval power dwindled rapidly by the middle of the 18th century. It was with clear vision and foresight that

Shivaji laid the foundation of the Maratha Navy at Kalyan, Bhivandi and Panvel which defended the west coastline of his kingdom and acted in concert with his land army admirably. The Maratha Navy reached its senith when Kanhoji Angre and after him Tulaji Angre were in its command. Their major shortcoming was lack of scientific knowledge in nautical matters. They neither made any serious attempt to manufacture guns and scientific apparatus nor were they eager to organise a mercantile marine which feeds a naval power. They shared this shortcoming with their countrymen who were mediaeval in their thought and action, when their European contemporaries were taking long strides in the scientific field. But in respect of personal courage, skill in organizing the navy and knowledge of naval warfare, they were as good as any seamen of their day.[41] Their vessels were no match for those of the Europeans. But by sheer dint of their bravery, courage and appropriate war tactics befitting their small vessels, they struck terror in the hearts of all powers, native and foreign. They were perhaps the most dreaded bucaneers on the west coast in the first part of the 18th century.

The feudal character of the Maratha State had its ill effect on the Maratha Navy too. During Shivaji's period, Shivaji was the Chief of the Navy. During the period of War of liberation, the power of the Chhatrapati became weak and Kanhoji Angre, instead of cooperating with the Chhatrapati,

defied his authority. Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath somehow succeeded in persuading him to accept Shahu's power. Tulaji Angre went a step further and became virtually independent by defying the authority of Peshwa Balaji Bajirao. The result was disastrous. Balaji Bajirao, in concert with the British, attacked his forces and defeated him in the battles of Suvarndurg (1755) and Vijaydurg (1756). The British took full advantage of this God-given opportunity and burnt the major part of Tulaji's armada.[42] Thus due to lack of foresight on the part of the Peshwa, the Maratha Navy received a terrible blow, from which it could never recover in future. The Peshwas tried to revive the Maratha naval power by creating an independent naval Subha under the command of the Dhulaps, but without success. The Maratha Navy could never reach its past glories. Thus prior to the first Anglo-Maratha War, the Maratha Navy was in a crippled state.

The above discussion regarding the evolution and growth of the Maratha and British Armies and Navies clearly shows that the Marathas, who had a fairly long military tradition in India, gave up the 'progressive' outlook of Shivaji and switched back to the traditional outdated mode of warfare in the 18th century. On the other hand, the British, who had their military traditions not in India but in England and Europe, built up within short time an army and navy from among the illiterate and undisciplined masses of India, which ~~was~~ were on ~~its~~ their way to complete modernisation before the first

Anglo-Maratha War broke out. This was possible only because of the advance the British had made in the fields of science, technology and industry during the periods of Renaissance, Reformation and Industrial Revolution in Europe.

In short, the first Anglo-Maratha War was a beginning of a series of clashes between two military systems, medieval and modern, for political supremacy of India.

Notes

1 'Military Traditions of Maharashtra' - an unpublished article by Major General Y.S. Paranjape (Retd.)

2 On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India, Vol. II, ed. by Thomas Watters, p. 239. Yuan Chwang or Hiuen Tsang was a Chinese pilgrim who travelled in India from 629 to 645 A.D. and he has left behind an account of his travel which has become famous throughout the world.

3 Gribble: A History of the Deccan, pp. 44, 52, 141 and 183; S.P.D. Vol 31, No. 1; Apte D.V.: Mudholachya Ghorapade Gharanyacha Itihas, p. 31.

4 The Mughal system of war was a combination of Mongol, Tartar and Persian tactics. The famous Tulaghma or the standard sweep was the invention of Changiz Khan. It was called closing of the two horns of the crescent. The mode of dividing the centre and the two wings into forward and reserve sections each had been introduced by Timur and the use of Arabas (war carts) and artillery pieces came from the western Turks. Their weapons and methods gave a tremendous hitting power to the invaders. The Deccanis were inferior to them in the military art and science and might have gone down rapidly but for the hilly and mountainous nature of their country. (Deopujari, B.M.: Shivaji and the Maratha Art of War, Introduction XII).

5 The fort of Golkonda with its building system and

accoustics, the fort of Ahmednagar with earthen glacis and Asirgad with its military works, are good examples of Muslim fort architecture in the Deccan.

6 "There is a close parallel between the expedients used by the Mughals such as feigned flight and sudden re-appearance and the methods used by the Marathas." (Deopujari, B.M.: Shivaji and the Maratha Art of War, p. 16, fn. 1). According to William Irvine, 'Taulqudmah' is a Chaghatai word for troops posted in ambush to turn the enemy, or the action of turning the flank of the enemy (pp. 227-28).

7 'Military Traditions of Maharashtra - an unpublished article by Major General Y.S.Paranjpe (Retd.)

8 "...He constructed new ramparts around Gingi, dug ditches, erected towers, created basins and executed all these works with a perfection which European art would not have denied." [Dr. Balkrishna: Shivaji the Great, Vol. II, Part I, pp. 252-53 (extract given from La Mission du Madura III, p. 283).].

9 P. Pissurlencar: Portuguese - Marathe Sambandh, p. 41.

10 V.S. Vakaskar (ed.): Sabhasadachi Bakhar, pp. 90-93.

11 Field-Marshal Montdgomery: A Concise History of Warfare, p. 132.

12 D.V. Apte (ed.): Maharashtra Itihasmanjari (Purvardha), p. 251.

13 A.L.S., Vol. I, p. 270, No. 175; Purandare Daftar, Vol. 3, p. 25.

14
15 The word 'kāvā' originally referred to the backward and forward movement of the horse and 'kāvebāji' meant deceiving the enemy cavalry as to the direction of the March (See Shivacharitra Sahitya, Vol. VIII, pp. 26, 46, 76).

16 K.M.L. Saxena: The Military System of India, p. 1.

17 Ibid., p. 2.

18 Ibid., p. 2.

19 Ibid., p. 2.

20 Sir Patric Cadell: History of the Bombay Army, p. 19.

21 The Military System of India, p. 2.

22 Cambridge History of India, Vol. VI, p. 153.

23 The Military System of India, p. 2.

24 G.F. MacMunn: The Armies of India, pp. 4-5.

25 Sir Henry Lucas: Empire at War, Vol. V, pp. 167-68.

26 India Year Book, 1920, p. 172.

27 R. Orme: History of Military Transactions, Vol. I, Fourth ed., p. 80.

28 History of the Bombay Army, p. 52.

29 Ibid., pp. 52-53.

30 Arthur Broome: History of the Rise and Progress of the Bengal Army, Vol. I, pp. 533-40.

31 India Year Book, 1920, p. 172.

32 History of the Bombay Army, p. 11.

33 Ibid., p. 75.

34 Ibid., pp. 51-52.

35 Ibid., p. 52.

36 Ibid., p. 52.

37 The Military System of India, p. 5.

38 Cambridge Shorter History of India, pp. 527-28.

39 K. Shridharan: A Maritime History of India, pp. 90-93.

40 Ibid., p. 94.

41 B.K. Apte: History of the Maratha Navy and Merchantships, p. 74.

42 Ibid., p. 82.

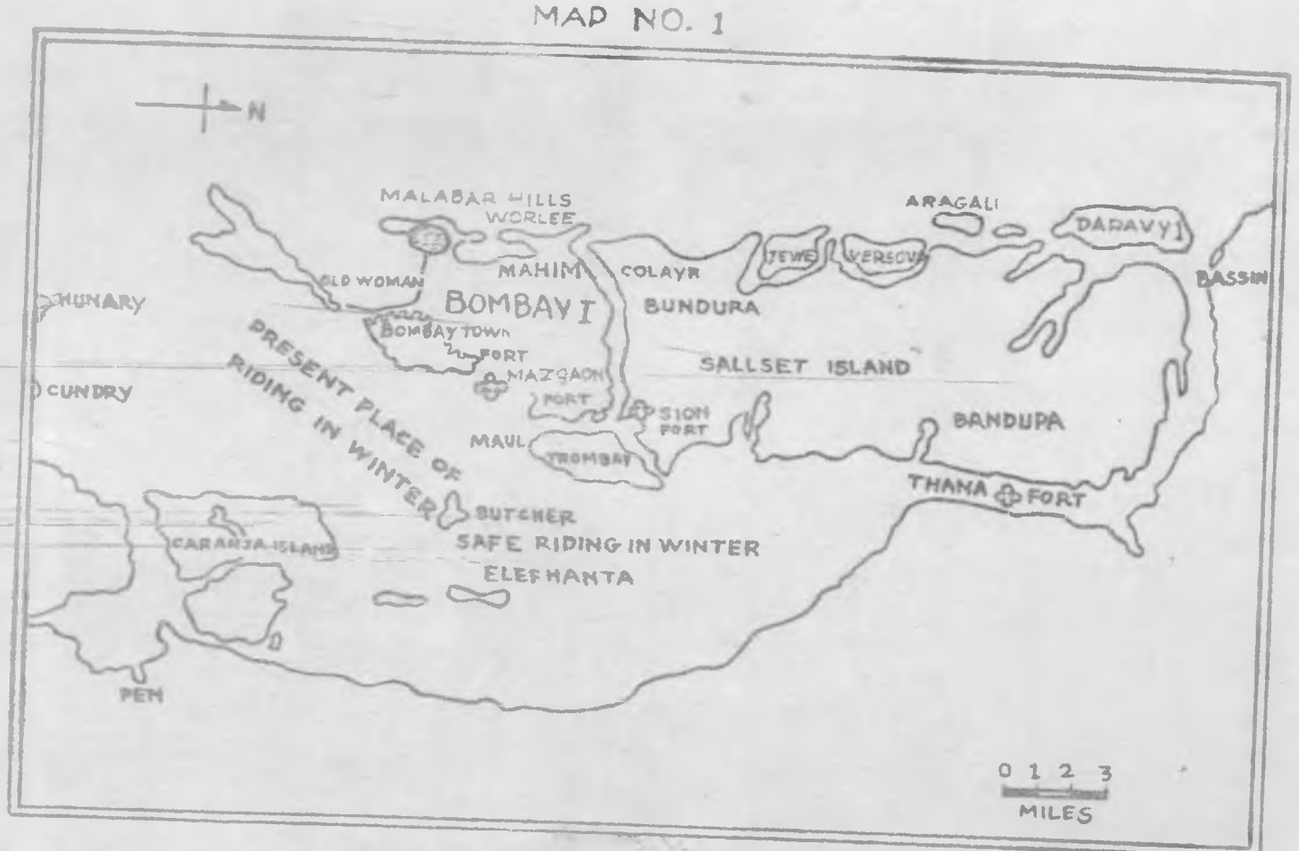
THE FIRST ANGLO-MARATHA WAR

FIRST PHASE (1774-1776)

Chapter III - THE SIEGE AND CAPTURE OF SASHTI (SALSETTE) FORT

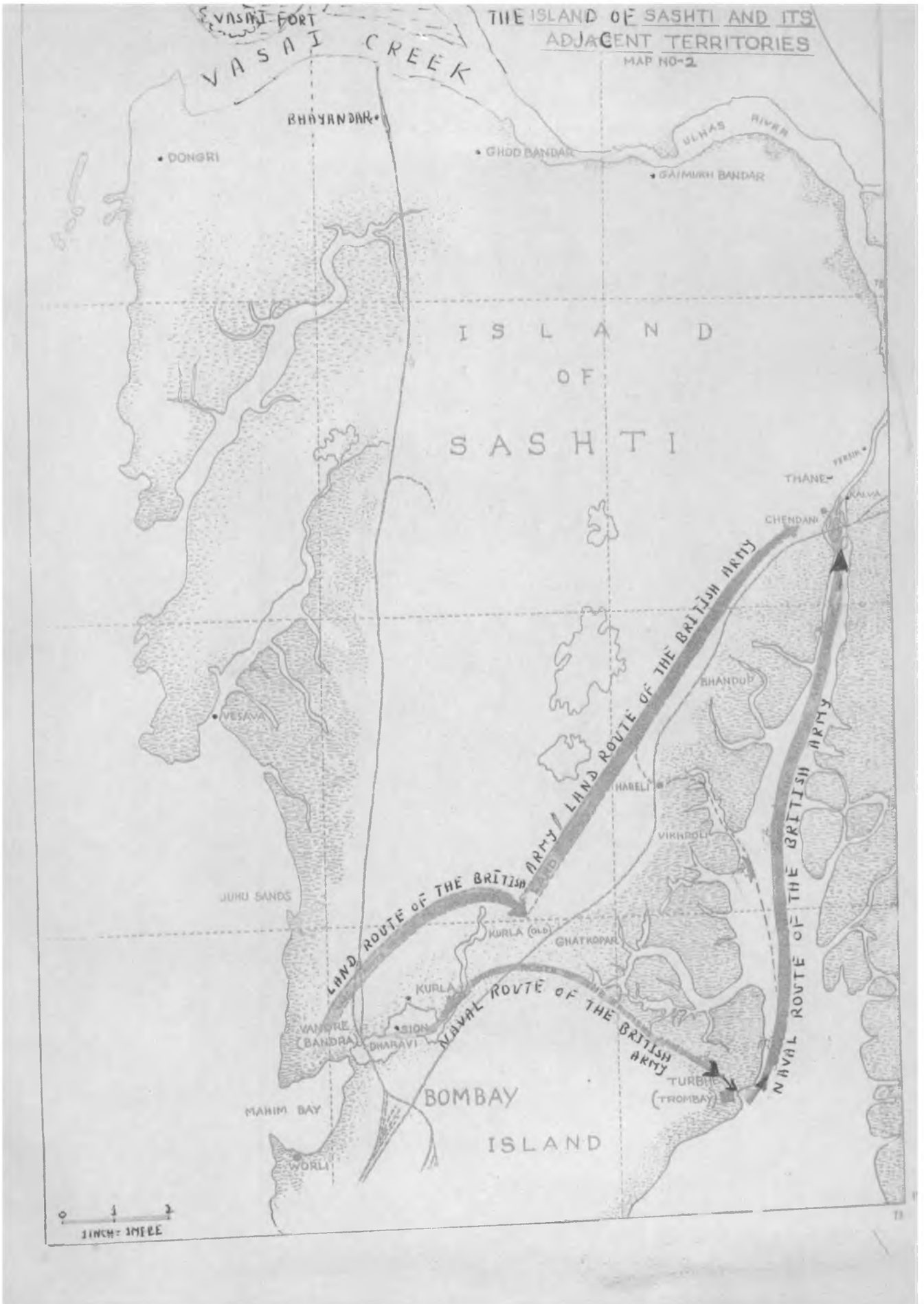
For geographical references, see Map Nos. 1 to 6, attached at the beginning of this chapter, between pp. 52 and 53.

MAP NO. 1



MAP OF THE PORT AND ISLAND OF BOMBAY WITH THE ADJACENT ISLANDS 1724.

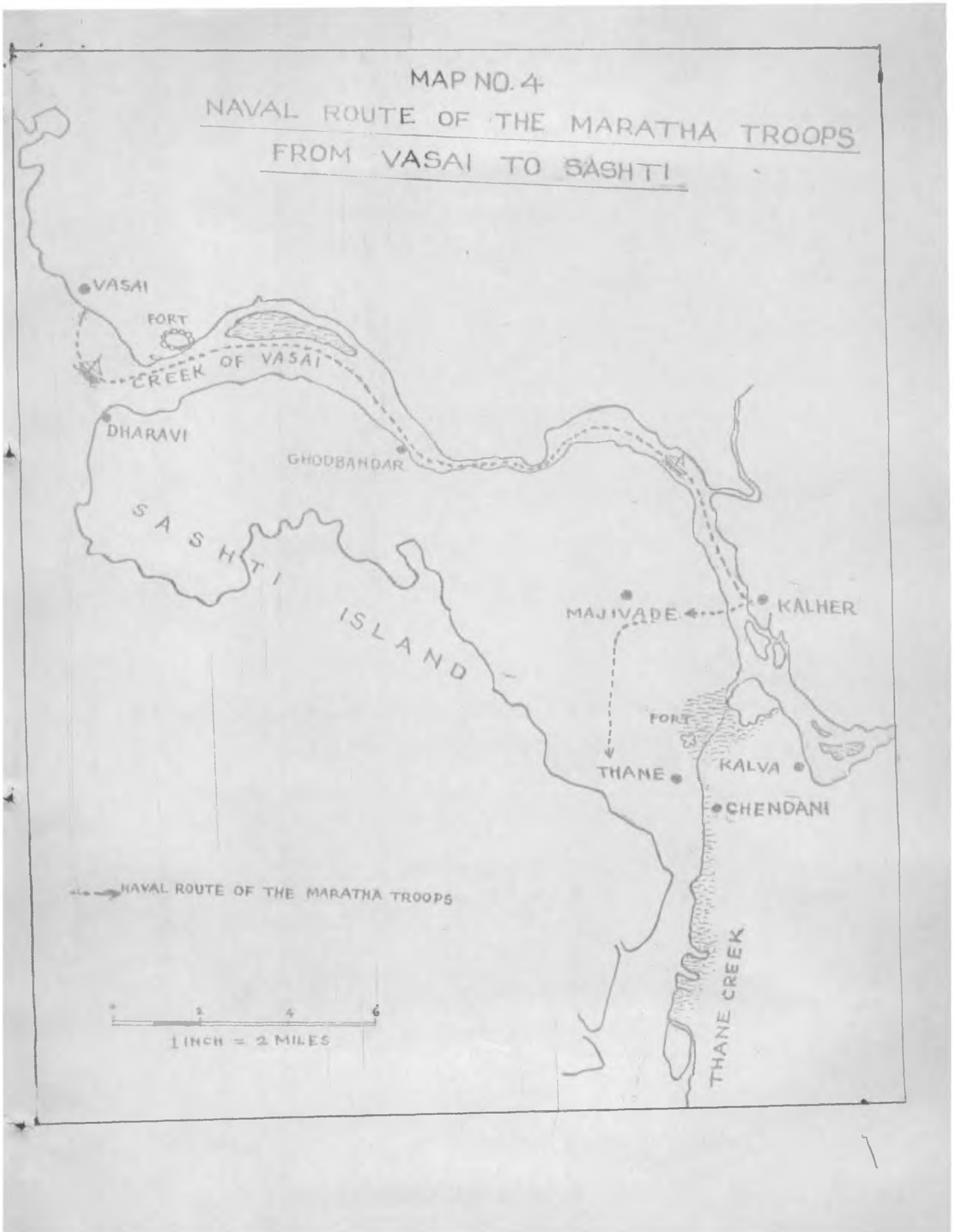
(REPRODUCED FROM BOMBAY TOWN AND ISLAND)


THE ISLAND OF SASHTI AND ITS ADJACENT TERRITORIES
MAP NO-2
VASAI FORT
VASAI CREEK
BHAYANDAR
DONGRI
GHOD BANDAR
ULHAS RIVER
GAIMUKH BANDAR
ISLAND OF SASHTI
THANE
KALVA
CHENDANI
BHANDUP
VESAVA
JUHU SANDS
KURLA (OLD)
GHATKOPAR
KURLA
VIKHROLI
VANDRE (BANDRA)
SION
DHARAVI
MAHIM BAY
WORLI
BOMBAY ISLAND
TURBHE (TROMBAY)
LAND ROUTE OF THE BRITISH ARMY
LAND ROUTE OF THE BRITISH ARMY
NAVAL ROUTE OF THE BRITISH ARMY
NAVAL ROUTE OF THE BRITISH ARMY
0 1 2
1 INCH = 1 MILE

MAP NO. 3

ROUTE OF THE MARATHA TROOPS ON THEIR WAY TO SASHTI (1774) : PUNE TO THANE



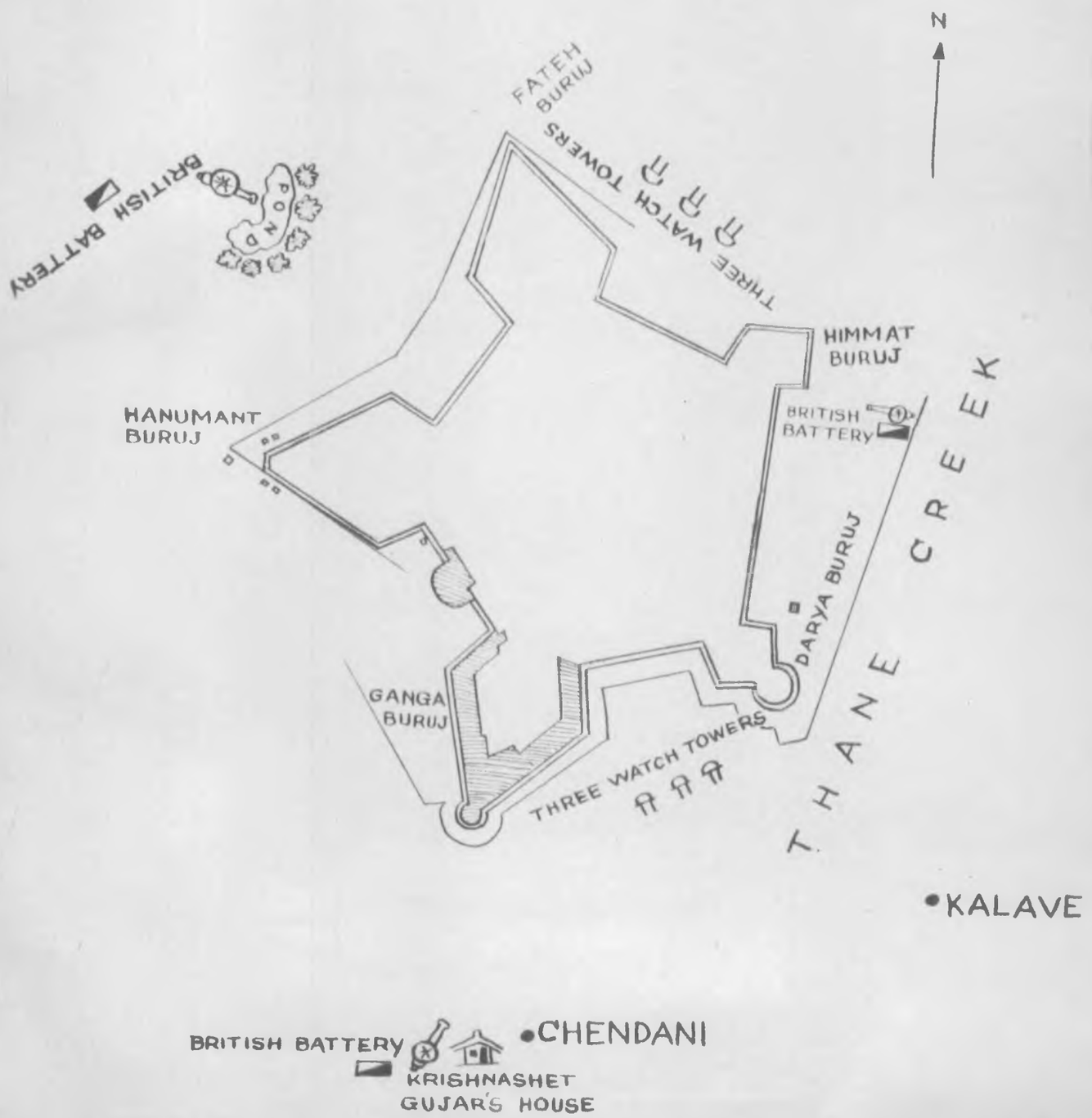

MAP NO. 4
NAVAL ROUTE OF THE MARATHA TROOPS
FROM VASAI TO SASHTI
VASAI
FORT
CREEK OF VASAI
DHARAVI
GHODBANDAR
SASHTI
ISLAND
MAJIVADE
KALHER
FORT
THANE
KALVA
CHENDANI
THANE CREEK
NAVAL ROUTE OF THE MARATHA TROOPS
0 2 4 6
1 INCH = 2 MILES

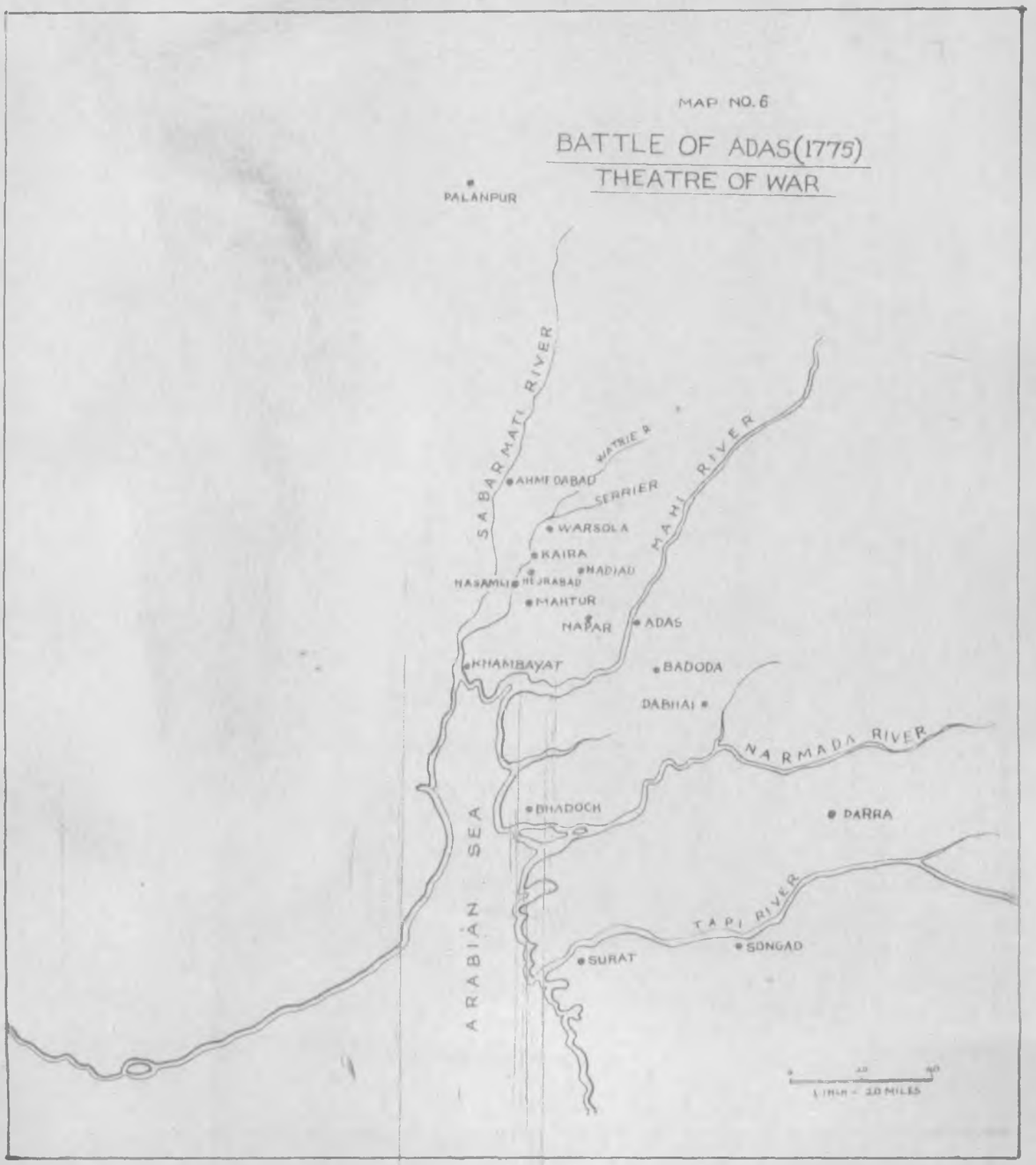
MAP NO. 5

PLAN OF THE SIEGE OF THE SASHTI FORT (1774)

SCALE — FOR PLAN OF FORT : 1" = 200'

FOR SHOWING BRITISH POSITIONS : 2" = 1 MILE




MAP NO. 6
BATTLE OF ADAS(1775)
THEATRE OF WAR
PALANPUR
SABARMATI RIVER
WATRIE R
AHMEDABAD
SERRIER
MAHI RIVER
WARSOLA
KAIRA
NADIAD
NASAMLI
MAHTUR
NAPAR
ADAS
KHAMBAYAT
BADODA
DABHAI
NARMADA RIVER
BHADOCH
DARRA
ARABIAN SEA
TAPI RIVER
SURAT
SONGAD
1 INCH = 20 MILES

CHAPTER III

THE SIEGE AND CAPTURE OF SASHTI (SALSETTE) FORT

There are three phases of the First Anglo-Maratha War. The first phase started with the British attack on the fort of Sashti (Salsette) and came to an end with the Treaty of Purandar in March 1776. During this phase, there were two major engagements between the Marathas and the British, the siege of Sashti (Thane) fort in the Konkan region and the battle of Adas in Gujrat. The second phase of the War started after the conclusion of the treaty of Purandar and ended with the Treaty of Vadgao in January 1779. During this phase, the first Borghat expedition resulting in the battle of Talegao was the major encounter between the Marathas and the British. The third and the final phase of the War started when the Bombay and the Calcutta Governments refused to abide by the articles of the Treaty of Vadgao and renewed hostilities against the Marathas. This final phase ended with the conclusion of the Treaty of Salbai in 1782. The present chapter discusses the first phase of the First Anglo-Maratha War.

It was the Bombay Government which precipitated the First Anglo-Maratha War by attacking the fort of Sashti without any provocation from the Maratha side. It was a masterpiece of political opportunism on the part of the British.

In the second half of the 18th century the East India

Company desired annexation of several islands on the western coast of India. These were the islands of Sashti, Vasai, Khanderi, Hog, Elephanta and Karanja. They were then in the possession of the Marathas. In the 18th century all these islands as well as the Bombay island were separate from one another.

There were a number of causes, political, economic and military, which attracted the attention of the Court of Directors of the East India Company to the above islands. These islands together formed the hinterland of the island of Bombay. The safety and accessibility of the Bombay harbour at all seasons of the year, its vicinity to the Marathas, particularly to one of the passes (i.e. the Borghat pass) through which the whole of the country above the Ghats might be supplied with the articles of England, were the factors which chiefly engaged the attention of the Directors of the Company in the acquisition of the islands. Their calculations were perfectly just, as woollen and other staples of England were sold at Bombay and the other nearby markets to the tune of Rs. fourteen lakhs annually. Besides this, due to the convenience of the Bombay harbour, the British and those who carried on trade under their protection, secured monopoly of trade in Indian commodities with the adjacent Maratha country.[1]

For a considerable time commerce alone engaged the attention of the Bombay Company; but the construction of

the docks and excellent timber with a number of artificers readily procurable there, made it strategically important. Even the commanders of the King of England's squadrons found that Bombay was the only port on the western coast of India where their ships could be properly repaired.[2]

Being aware of the growing importance of Bombay and its defenceless state, the Court of Directors sent Colonel Campbell to Bombay in 1768 to inspect the state of fortifications there. Following Campbell's report, they considerably enlarged the military establishments at Bombay.[3]

Notwithstanding the natural inconveniences of the Bombay island due to want of springs and streams of fresh water and the poorness of its natural produce from the time of its possession by the English, its population increased considerably. Many people were attracted there by freedom granted to all religions and the mildness of the government. At the time the Bombay island came into possession of the British, its population was 10,000. In the year 1764 it increased to 60,000.

The Bombay Government was aware that the increase of population in the Bombay island would bring distress in future. It had realised that it had not only to meet its own expenses but also to supply capital to the Company for its investment in Europe and China. But this could be achieved only by acquiring new territories yielding more revenue. It was felt that the capture of the islands of

Sashti and Vasai as well as appropriation of the revenues of Surat claimed by the Marathas would meet their requirement.[4]

Bombay could safety rely on Sashti, Karanja and Vasai for provisions of all kinds. The possession of Vasai and its surrounding territories ensured a steady supply of timber for the British marine yard at Bombay. It was very dangerous from the point of view of the Bombay Government to remain the Sashti, Vasai and other adjacent islands in the Maratha hands, because in case hostilities broke out with the Marathas or the French, the docks at Bombay would have been rendered almost useless, as ~~it~~ they could not have secured regular supply of timber from these areas.[5]

Today a large part of the island of Sashti has been joined to the island of Bombay and this extended area together with the original Bombay island is known as Greater Bombay. The boundary of Greater Bombay extends from Kolaba in the south to Bhayandar-Ghodbandar in the north and to Thane-Mulund ~~to~~ in the east. In the 18th century, however, the geographical situation of the Bombay island was quite different. Then the area of the Bombay island proper extended from Kolaba in the South to Kurla in the north. Mahim was the north-west point of the Bombay island and Turbhe (Trombay) was its north-east point. The northern boundary of the island stretching from Mahim to Turbhe was completely separated from the island of Sashti by the

Mahim-Kurla creek.

The island of Sashti was to the north of the Bombay island, from which it was divided by a narrow channel of about half a mile in breadth. Vandre (Bandra) was its southernmost point and Vandre-Kurla (old) - Ghatkopar was its southern boundary line. Dongri-Bhayandar - Ghodbandar - Gaimukhbandar was its northern boundary. In the north, the island of Vasai was separated from the island of Sashti by the Vasai Creek and Ulhas river. The western coast-line of the Sashti island stretched from Dongri to Vandre and its eastern coast-line extended from the river Ulhas upto Kurla (old). The fort of Sashti island proper i.e. Thane was on the eastern coast-line of the ~~Sashti~~ that island. This eastern coast-line was separated from the main land (extending from Persik-Belapur upto the Borghat) by Ulhas river and the narrow creek of Thane[1].

The chief produce of the Sashti island was rice. There was much scope for increasing the production of rice, as only two third of the land had been brought under cultivation. The fort of Thane, commanding a fordable channel dividing Sashti from the main land, was in the middle of the eastern side of the island. The possession of Sashti would have added an income of Rs. 3,50,000 per annum to the revenue of Bombay.

Karanja was a small island on the east of Bombay forming a part of the eastern side of the harbour, its chief produce

was also ride. By 1775 it produced rice worth about Rs. 6000 per annum and there was every scope for improvement in the yield. Elephanta was a small island which yielded a revenue of about Rs. 800 per annum. The islands Hog and Kanheri were little more than barren rocks.[6]

Vasai was a peninsula formed by the river Vaitarana on the north, by Arabian Sea on the west and by the creek of Vasai and river Ulhas on the south, the last two dividing it from the island of Sashti which was to its south. It produced rice, many fruits and particularly sugarcane of fine quality. The fort of Vasai which was situated to the south-west point of the island, was strategically important as it commanded the Vasai Creek between Vasai and Sashti islands and was useful for guarding the southern coast of the Vasai island and the northern coast of the Sashti island. The island of Vasai extended to the north within eight kos of Daman, including Tarapur, Mahim, Arnala and some other towns situated on small rivers flowing from the Ghats.

All the above-mentioned islands were to the south of Surat, forming a continued chain with Bombay of about 86 miles from the north to the south. Two additional battalions of sepoys would have been sufficient to maintain the necessary posts in this long extended area. The revenues of Sashti with Vasai and its adjacent territories were only estimated at Rs. 7.2 lakhs, but under the British rule,

the Directors thought, they would produce ten lakhs at least annually.[7]

In 1774 the Bombay island was only a small place, separated from six other islands. As the island was separated by creeks, it was easy for the enemies of the British to apply an effective maritime blockade to it. If the adjacent islands were in the possession of the East India Company, the British could easily prevent the blockade of Bombay. The British authorities also thought that in times of emergency, the islands of Sashti and Vasai would serve as second and third lines of defence.

The steady rise in the trade of Bombay between 1664 and 1774 gave rise to the emergence of a new rich mercantile class in the island. This class was energetic and had great commercial ambitions. To give an outlet to the ambitions of this new mercantile class, it was necessary to get possession of the islands round about Bombay.

At the beginning of the later half of the 18th century, the East India Company hoped that it might be possible to acquire the island of Sashti and its dependencies through peaceful means. In March 1768 the authorities of the Company wrote to the Bombay Government, "We cannot directly point out the mode of doing it, but rather wish they could be obtained by purchase."[8] As per these instructions, the Bombay Government tried to secure these islands through negotiations with the Marathas during the last days of

Peshwa Madhavrao I. But due to the Peshwa's serious illness resulting in his untimely death, these negotiations did not bear any fruit. During the short but chaotic reign of Peshwa Narayanrao, there was very little chance for renewing the negotiations.

After Narayanrao Peshwa's murder, the Maratha State found itself in a turmoil due to the rivalry between the Barbhais or Karbharis like Nana Phadnis, Sakharam Bapu, Mahadaji Shinde and others on the one side and Raghunathrao Peshwa, Madhavrao Peshwa's uncle, on the other. The pitched battles fought between the two parties ultimately drove Raghunathrao alias Raghoba into the hands of the English at Surat. The British demanded from Raghoba the islands of Sashti and its adjacent areas as a reward for their assistance to him in getting Peshwaship. However, Raghoba was not prepared for such a bargain.

In the middle of the year 1774, the Maratha fort officer of Thane secretly negotiated with William Hornby, the Governor of Bombay, for the transfer of the ~~above places~~ Thane for a sum of Rs. two lakh sixty thousand. Hornby was not willing to pay more than Rs. one lakh for this transaction. The Maratha fort-officer agreed to accept the proposal provided Hornby would give an additional amount of twenty thousand rupees, which was required, according to him, to satisfy some people.[9] Considering the unsettled state of the Maratha State and the probability of obtaining the

Thane fort by some other means, the Bombay Council decided to postpone the negotiations with the fort officer. In November, 1774, Hornby was informed by Henshaw, the English resident at Goa, that Don Joze Pedro de Camera, a general of recognized merit, had arrived as Governor of Goa and the Portuguese had fitted out a strong armament to recover their lost possessions including Sashti and Vasai.[10] This report might be true or not, but it certainly provided the British an excuse to set aside the instructions of the Court of Directors to resort to peaceful ways in solving their problems with the Indian states. On receipt of this intelligence, the Bombay Select Committee resolved to obtain the possession of Sashti for the Company by force. The Bombay Government wanted to keep both the contending Maratha parties in a state of humour lest their action on Sashti might provoke the hostility of either or both. Raghoba was to be assured through Robert Gambier, the acting chief of Surat, that in attacking Sashti the English wanted to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Portuguese. Sashti would be given up to Raghoba, if he was so much keen on having it, on his granting the English an equivalent for it. Mostyn, the British Resident at Pune (Poona) Court, was also to try to reconcile the Council of Barbhais, by giving them the assurance of future possession of Sashti on the same terms in case their party should prevail in the contest.

Thus the Bombay Government's policy to attack Sashti sparked off a series of battles between the English and the Marathas during the period from 1774 to 1783, which is known as the first Anglo-Maratha War. In starting the War, the political motive of the Bombay Government in the initial stages was limited only to the possession of the island of Sashti and its dependencies. But once Raghoba threw in his lot with the British, the latter's ambitions no longer remained confined to the possession of the islands they wanted; they sored high to make an entry into internal politics at Pune and to instal Raghoba on the Peshwaship with a view to guiding the policies of the Maratha State to their own political and economic benefits.

War is a political act. In its basic aspect, in the words of Clausewitz, the famous German commander, "It is an act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfil our will."[11] The organized military force at the disposal of the State is its chief instrument of violence used for realising its political aims. Whether war, as defined above, should be regarded as a science or an art is a disputed point. Clausewitz looked upon war as a form of social relationship, a conflict of great interest, which is settled by bloodshed. Since there is no positive theory of the conduct of war applicable to all conditions and situations, it is difficult to regard war as a science. ~~In other~~ According to Clausewitz, "The absolute or the mathematical, as it is

called, nowhere finds any sure basis in war. From the outset, it is based on a play of possibilities, probabilities, good and bad luck."[12]

Nevertheless the search for constant factors and principles, independent of the kinds of weapons used and historical circumstances, has continued to exercise men's minds. Jomini[13] maintained that human mind was capable of discerning and stating in some systematic form methods, which are likely to bring success in warfare, and fundamental principles upon which depend good results in warfare. The generally accepted principles are: (1) Offensive action, (2) Surprise, (3) Mobility, (4) Concentration, (5) Economy of force, (6) Co-operation, (7) Security.[14] But the actual application of these principles brings war within the province of art. Liddel Hart[15] has rightly said, "War is a science which depends upon art for its application." The expression 'Art of War', then, refers to the way in which the material and moral means are used in fighting, in order to realise the political objective.

In the category of material means are included: (1) The armed faces of the State - their numerical strength, proportion of the three arms (infantry, cavalry and artillery) and organization, (2) The country and the Theatre of War, (3) Forts or defensive lines. In the category of moral means of War are included: (1) Talent or genius of the commander, his original conception and ideas, (2) Tactics

and manoeuvres, (3) The spirit animating the army, discipline and morale and (4) Co-operation of the people.

The Bombay Select Committee finalised its plan of attack on Sashti on the 12th December 1774. In this plan are found some of the basic principles of war followed by the commanders of the Bombay Government. Firstly, they took an offensive when the political and military conditions were favourable to them. The two parties at the Pune Court, one headed by Raghoba and the other by the Karbharis were fighting between themselves, with the result that the bulk of the Maratha armed forces ~~were~~ was engaged in destroying each other and they could not be deployed for the defence of the Sashti fort. Raghoba's surrender to the British on his own gave an opportunity to the British to use him as a pawn in the game of political negotiations with the Marathas. Secondly, the British plan had an element of surprise as the Marathas were least expecting the attack. The element of the co-operation was also there, because the army and the navy of the Bombay Government were to co-operate with each other in the joint land-cum-naval attack on the Thane fort. Brigadier General Gordon was appointed to command the land forces and John Watson was placed in charge of the naval units.[16]

The fort of Thane had been originally built by the Portuguese. The Portuguese started its construction in 1730, and even though it was in an unfinished stage in 1737,

it offered a stout but unsuccessful resistance to the Maratha army under Chimaji Appa. After its capture, the Marathas completed its construction work on the lines of the original Portuguese plan.

The fort of Thane was a pentagon in size with regular bastions, curtains and towers mounting more than a hundred canon.[16-a] In 1774, the names of some of the bastions were Darya Buruj, Ganga Buruj, Hanumant Buruj, Fateh Buruj and Himmat Buruj.[16-b] Besides these regular bastions, there were two or three watch-towers each on the southern and northern sides of the fort. These towers were not only useful for watching the movements of the enemy, but they also served as first line of defence. The weakest link in the Maratha defence of the fort was its navy. As the fort of Thane was land-cum-sea fort, it was approachable both by land and sea-routes. The Marathas had not stationed strong naval units at Chendani (1 mile to the south of Thane) and Kalava (1 mile to the east of Thane) through which the enemy ships could enter the shore of Thane easily.

Brigadier General Gordon proceeded to Thane at 10 o'clock in the morning on the 12th December, 1774. At 7 p.m. on the same day, the remainder of the military force embarked on board sundry boats and advanced towards Thane. This force was commanded by John Watson. After a most fatiguing and long march in the heat of the day through very rugged ground, Gordon's forces arrived in the neighbourhood of Thane at

at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. The troops were much depressed by the heat. The troops marched on with utmost alacrity through a very hot fire of the Maratha garrison of the fort, both of great guns (garnāls) and musketry (jejālās) of which they took no notice or even returned one shot till they got possession of the town. Then the troops were lodged in the Portuguese Church. This Church was situated half a mile from the fort on the side of a large pond surrounded by mango and tamarind groves.[18]

The Maratha garrison in the fort of Thane was alert. The Maratha commandant of the fort, Anandrao Ram Biwalkar,[19] the son of Ramaji Mahadeo Biwalkar, got reports of the movements of Mostyn and the Bombay Council three days before the attack of the fort. In one of his letters to Nana Phadnis he writes, "On the 9th December 1774 in the morning Mostyn started from Pune and arrived at Bombay. On the very day a Council meeting was held and the Bombay Government started collection of ammunition and other war material. On the 10th, I had a report from my two spies at Bombay that the British would attack either Sashti or Vasai."[20]

On the 12th night, two guards posted at Kurla[21] and Paripav Mahal[22] came to Anandrao Ram and told him that 1000 enemy soldiers had gathered at the port of Sion[23] and that the enemy was coming to Sashti by means of sixty to seventy big ships, 5 medium-sized ships and ten small ships. Anandrao Ram sent a message to Bhavanji Kadam, the havaldar

of the fort, to be on his guard. Anandrao then sent the inhabitants of Thane to Kalvā[24] wherefrom they crossed the creek. Afterwards he himself, with nearly three to four hundred men went to the shore of the port Chendani[25] to watch the movements of the enemy. Next day he saw some galivats[26] at the Turbhe island. From that island, twenty ships entered the creek of Hareli.[27] In the evening the British forces going by ships arrived at Chendani. Some of the British forces landed at Hareli wherefrom they entered the island of Sashti and proceeded further by a land-route. The British forces here numbered 500. Besides, via Sion-Kurla water route nearly one thousand British troops made their headway to the Sashti island. From Kurla they marched ahead by a land route. Thus the British marched in the direction of their target by three routes - one water-route and the other two land routes.[28] The total number of the British troops deployed was nearly two thousand five hundred including the irregulars. On the other hand, the total number of Maratha soldiers in the fort of Thane was approximately 1000. This shows that the British had an edge over the Maratha garrison by their numerical superiority. Naturally, Anandrao Ram was forced to withdraw his forces into the fort.[29]

At this juncture, Jotyaji Jadhavrao[30] and Shivrao Hari[31] were at Kalvā with two hundred men. Keeping in mind the numerical superiority of the enemy, Anandrao Ram sent Govind Hari

and Balaji Mahadeo to bring them back. But instead of retracing their steps, both of them attacked the British forces who were advancing from Chendani port. There was a fierce encounter between the two sides. Nearly ten to twenty men fell on both the sides. Govind Hari's forces having been outnumbered, he made a retreat. Jadhavrao retreated to Majivade[32] by the left side of the fort.

After driving away the forces of Govind Hari and Jadhavrao, the British occupied all houses in the town of Thane round about the fort including the Darbar House[33] and the house of Ramaji Mahadeo Bivalkar.[34] The sepoys and Gardis in the British army occupied these houses and under their cover opened fire on the fort. The Maratha garrison of the fort retaliated. However, their shooting did not prove to be effective as some of their shots went atop the houses occupied by the British soldiers. Some shots inflicted negligible damage on the enemy. In the heat of excitement some Maratha troops stepped out of the fort and advanced towards the houses occupied by the British with a view to setting fire to them. But severe fire from the British muskets and guns drove them back into the fort with a loss of three men, including one Arab. Mahadaji Naik Chougule was severely wounded in the neck by a bullet.[35] On the British side, the drum major of the first battalion, a grenadier and two sepoys were wounded.[36]

With the fall of the town of Thane on the 12th December

1774, the first phase of the siege of Sashti came to an end. During this phase, the object of the British army was to make a three pronged attack by land and naval routes, land at three centres on the Sashti island and capture the Thane town with a view to erecting batteries for bombarding the main fort of Thane. By capturing the town of Thane they successfully blackaded the fort on almost all sides, thus cutting the line of communication and the line of supplies of the Maratha garrison in the Thane fort. Now it was difficult for the Pune court to send succours to the garrison.

For this situation the Marathas themselves were to be blamed. On the political front, the Karbharis and Raghoba could not patch up their differences and they wasted their men and money in mutual fighting. That is why the Pune government could not send timely succours to the garrison of the fort of Thane.

The Maratha defence of the Thane fort was quite weak. Firstly, the number of Maratha soldiers posted at the three important centres, Chendani, Hareli and Sion-Kurla, was inadequate. It was for this reason that they could not effectively check the British advance in its initial stages. Secondly, some part of the Maratha naval ships should have been permanently kept at Hareli under the command of Dhulap. Actually not a single Maratha ship arrived at Hareli to oppose the British. This shows not only lethargy on the

part of the Maratha navy, but also lack of co-operation between the army and the navy. Contrary to this, the British land and naval forces acted in perfect unison. The Maratha land and naval forces could not make a concerted drive against the British because the Maratha navy was too weak to oppose the British navy.

Occupying the town of Thane, the British forces started the work of erecting batteries for mounting their cannon on the 13th December. The Marathas kept up a brisk fire of cannon and musketry with the result that the British were not able to erect permanent batteries on the first two days.[37]

On their entry into the town, the British troops found that all its inhabitants had evacuated their houses and fled, having been summoned to the fort by the fort-officer. All the Portuguese and some Hindus took to the hilly region in the vicinity. The British issued placards in the villages through which they passed. These placards assured the people of the protection that would be afforded to them.

The garrison of the Thane fort continued firing throughout the night of the 13th. As the British took possession of all the Maratha guarding posts on the southern or Bombay side of the fort, all communication of the Marathas on that side of the fort came to a standstill. Next, the passage to Kalva on the eastern side of the fort came under the fire of the British musketry. The other avenues of the town were blocked up by the British. To counter those British moves, the Marathas

made two sallies opposite to the Durbar House where Captain Steurt was posted, but they were instantly repulsed by a British unit, which advanced under cover to the edge of the esplanade. In the meantime, Mr. Watson returned to Chendani on the 14th to get landed the rest of the stores. Gordon sent a list of stores and ordnance to the Bombay Council urgently. He also requested for two 12 pounders with battery carriages.

The British had kept some ships and gurabs[39] to the southern side of the fort, facing Bombay where there were three watchtowers or bastions. The British ships cannonaded these bastions or watch powers incessantly. The middle, main bastion was known as 'Sarjya Buruj'. Sidoji Pawar was guarding that Buruj with 15 men. Due to the effect of British cannon shots, 9 of the 15 men on the Sarjya Buruj were killed and the Buruj caught fire. The remaining six men jumped into water and reached the fort. The British took possession of all the three bastions, where they erected their batteries and started firing the fort.[40]

On the 15th December, one boat brought the much awaited 12 pounder cannon from Bombay at Chendani. Mr. Watson went down to get them ashore and all the bigārīs were employed by the British in making the road; but the small number of these people retarded the construction work. The local people were afraid of working for the British, lest the

Marathas would burn their houses. The road was completed in the night and a 12 pounder henceforth effectively commanded the passage to Kalva.[41]

Anandrao Ram, the chief of the Thane fort, was anxiously waiting for succour from Pune. He repeatedly wrote to Nana Phadnis to send troops from Pune as early as possible. Nana Phadnis and Naro Appaji Keskar informed Anandrao Ram that Visaji Krishna Binivale was arriving from Saswad with a strong contingent and a good number of footmen.[42] Anandrao Ram had also written to the commandants of the forts of Vasai, Rajmachi,[43] Mahuli[44] as well as the Angres and Dhulaps, who were in charge of the Maratha navy, to despatch forces (which they could spare) for his help. The Killedar of Vasai, Yesaji Shivdeo, sent his brother Antaji Shivdeo with five hundred men, who reached Sashti in the morning on the 16th December 1774. They took their route by embarking some ships and gullivats and landed at the port of Kalher from where they reached ~~to~~ Majivade, on the north side of the Thane fort, Govind Hari went from the fort to meet them. After the meeting, they retired for their meals, when all of a sudden a number of Gardis on the British side attacked them in three batches. The Maratha cavalry under Govind Hari and the men from Vasai fought bravely. In the encounter, a horse of Jotyaji Jadhavrao, the son of famous Pilaji Jadhavrao, received a bullet wound. One horseman from Shivrao Hari's unit was injured

and three men of Anandrao Bivalkar himself were wounded. Both the sides then retired to their respective positions.[45] Anandrao Ram's men returned to the fort while those of Govind Hari went back to Kalva.

The 17th and 18th December passed without any noteworthy events on the war front. The British attempts at erecting the batteries were foiled by the constant firing from the fort. However, on the 18th at night, Brigadier General Gordon succeeded in erecting two batteries, one to the south of the fort by taking cover behind the house of Krishnashet Gujar and the other to the north west side of the fort, near a pond surrounded by some trees. With the help of these two batteries the 22 pounders of the British fired at the store department of the fort which was located on the southern side. Gordon also erected a third battery on the shore near the creek. From this battery a cannon boomed on the ~~Eauch~~ Himmat Buruj of the fort, which was to the north east side.[46] The land route to the fort from its north side also came under fire.

On the 19th, the British gunners started cannonading from the battery on the south-west side of the fort. Nearly twenty-five cannon shots and fifteen garnāl shots fell into the fort. On that day two men of the Maratha garrison were slightly injured.[47] From the next day the British batteries intensified their cannonading. From down to dusk nearly two hundred and fifty shots fell into the fort. One gunner from the Maratha side was killed and nearly thirty-five

men were severely wounded. The gun-shots damaged the bastions of the fort. The guns which Anandrao Ram had erected on the Darya Buruj were put out of action by the effective British fire. The shots of the Maratha guns in the fort, however, went overhead the besiegers, inflicting on them very insignificant damage.[48] This shows the mathematical accuracy and sound technique of the British gunners and artillerymen as against the purposeless and random firing by the Marathas.

By the end of the third week of December, only 850 men arrived from outside which included 500 men from Vasai, 125 men from Rajmachi, 100 men from the Subha of Kalyan, 35 men from Mahuli and 100 men of Angre, to the rescue of the Sashti fort. This number was quite insufficient to raise the siege of British who had above two thousand soldiers at their command. Nearly four to five thousand select Maratha cavalry and infantry soldiers were required to repeal the British attack. Anandrao Ram sent messages to Jotyaji Jadhav and Shivrao Hari Nevalkar who had stationed their cavalry near Kalva, on the eastern side of the fort, to come to his rescue. But the two Maratha officers did not venture to attack the British under the pretext that they had small contingents at their disposal and that they would attack the enemy after the arrival of a large force from Pune. But their men did not hesitate to loot the local inhabitants of Kalva and its neighbouring areas. Anandrao

Ram made complaints about this indescent behaviour on the part of the Maratha officers to Nana.[49] This shows that the Marathas cared very little for winning over the sympathy of the local habitants, which is supposed to be one of the essential principles of war even to-day. The British, on the contrary, tried to assure the local people of Thane of good treatment and won over their sympathies.

Brigadier General Gordon had given order for three 24 pounders and 18 pounders and two howitzers from Bombay. They arrived on the 16th December 1774. That very day he ordered Captain Maclean to reconnoitre a small fort to the northward[50] and to assault it, if he thought, it could be done with a prospect of success. He was to patrol as far as the village Marol, about five miles to the north of the Sashti fort. Accordingly, Maclean marched on this service with a company of sepoy Grenadiers. About a mile and a half from the town he fell in with about eighty Maratha horse and four to five hundred foot, who were immediately attacked and driven from their posts. The village which these Maratha forces had occupied was set on fire by Maclean and his men. In executing this service a sergeant and nine sepoys were wounded and two killed. The fort to the northward i.e. Yashwantgad was so situated that it could not be attacked without risking lives of a number of men, as the approach to it was flanked on the right by the enemy fire from the Sashti fort and on the left by some gallivats. The Marathas exchanged fire which did very little damage, as the British troops had got so near the

walls of the Yashwantgad fort that the garrison of the Sashti fort found it difficult to bring their guns from the lofty towers to bear on the advancing British forces. The main defect of the Maratha guns and cannon was that they were neither easily movable nor could they be easily directed to any side and adjusted to any angle. The British guns and cannon were so cast that they could be adjusted to any angle and any range short or long with ease.

Gordon determined not to fire a shot till he had every gun and mortar in battery ready for attack.[51] The purpose behind this decision was to economise gun-powder and to spare it for its effective use at the right moment and at the right spot. This is known in military parlance as principle of economy. The Marathas did not follow this principle. They unnecessarily wasted their cannon-shots and gun-powder without making any impression whatsoever on the advancing British parties.

While Gordon was doing his job in his own way, John Watson, the commander of Marine force, was co-operating with him. He joined Gordon on the 14th December 1774, after landing all his vessels and stores at Chendani, a port one mile to the south of the Thane fort on the Bombay side. The first thing Watson did was to order a gallivat to cruise between Turbhe and Butcher Island for the protection of any English boats coming. Watson proposed Gordon to take route up Kalva, but the latter did not choose to separate his force. Watson then ordered his Sheriff to land at Kalva in the

night of the 14th and set fire to that village, which had so good an effect that three southern forts[52] were evacuated by the Marathas, as the residents were apprehensive of their retreat which might be cut off. Watson landed all his cannon on the 14th and a 24 pounder was brought up to the town.[53]

Next day Watson went out with a party to the northward of the town and fell in with a contingent of the Marathas of about sixty horse and three to four hundred foot. A reinforcement was sent and the Maratha troops were dispersed. Watson saw eight or ten gallivats, which he supposed, had been sent from Vasai. He came to realise that the Maratha contingent had fought with him under the cover of fire from the Fateh Buruj of the Sashti fort as also from the gallivats he just saw. He also noticed that the British forces had neither erected any battery nor established any camp near the Fateh Buruj. That part of the town near Fateh Buruj was still open to the Marathas. Their cavalry marchéd very leisurely and crossed on the side of the Fateh Buruj on the 16th evening and set fire to the opposite village. Watson proposed to Gordon to burn or take the gallivats the next day in the morning and storm the Himmat Buruj and the Fateh Buruj, which would cut off the whole line of communication of the Marathas, as the British were in possession of the southern forts or watch-towers. But Gordon was of the opinion that the capture of the main fort was their chief

object. Once it was occupied the inferior posts would fall automatically. So he wanted all his force to be united. In this plan he was adopting, what is called in military science, the Principle of Concentration, in order to hit the main centres of the enemy. Watson offered Gordon 300 men and 2 field pieces to destroy the gallivats but was told that the ground near the place of landing of the Maratha gallivats being marshy and muddy was unfit to march in, though the horse could pass and repass there. The outcome of Gordon's policy not to follow Watson's instructions was that the garrison of the fort could be easily furnished with succour via Vasai river[54] and the village Majivade.

Seeing the Maratha gallivats appearing again, Watson again represented to Gordon the great evils that might arise by not possessing the forts[55] to the northward, but was answered, it was impracticable and the opinions of the colonels was sought. Watson offered no opinion but only expressed the consequences which affected the British interests. By the capture of these forts the Marathas could be prevented effectually from receiving any succour but their non-possession would enable the Marathas to send their succour to the Sashti fort without any trouble. This might baffle the British designs and bring disgrace to them. Watson's opinion was that not one of the gentlemen present had the least local knowledge of the ground, yet they pronounced the impracticability of an assault due to the badness of the ground and that also from the report of

Captain Maclean who gave it only from a distance the other day.[56] Gordon committed a mistake of neglecting the sound advice of Watson, for which he had to pay a price later on.

Gordon complained later on to the Bombay Council that the information they had received regarding the fort, roads, etc. proved to be incorrect and that the fort was very strong. By the 20th December 1774, all the batteries were ready to bombard the fort.

Nana Phadnis had arranged a very efficient postal service from Pune upto Persik, creating various stations in between the two centres. Due to this arrangement, the messengers could carry news of Sashti to Pune very expeditiously. Besides, the spy-reports could reach Nana from Sashti and its surrounding territories speedily. The various stations of the postal service of Nana were located at Vakad, Chandkhed, Kadhade, Ambegao, Kusgao, Khandale, Khopoli, Chowk, Chikhale, Taloje and Persik.[57] These stations give a good idea about the route from Pune to Thane in the 18th century which was followed by the Maratha forces. Anandrao Ram was constantly writing to Pune and the officers of the neighbouring forts for substantial assistance. On the 20th December, 300 men approached Sashti from Vasai via Vasai-Vasai creek-Kalher-Majivade route by ships. Among all the Maratha officers, only the commandant of the Vasai fort displayed a sense of duty. He sent not only 700 troops under the command of his

brother Antaji Shivdev, but also some gunners, carpenters and blacksmiths.[58] The total number of Maratha troops was now 925 men outside the fort and the fort garrison was nearly one thousand. If the Maratha forces outside the fort had attacked the British batteries and kept them engaged in fighting with them, the pressure on the garrison in the fort could have been reduced considerably. But unfortunately, the commanders of the forces outside the fort were not ready to move till a large body of Maratha army under Visaji Krishna and the Gardis arrived from Pune.

On the 19th December, many of the machicolations[59] in the bastion, used for firing at the besiegers were put out of action due to the severe bombardment of the British batteries. The Marathas, therefore, could not use all the cannon in the fort simultaneously. The British batteries too had their own difficulties. The fuses of some these batteries were not satisfactory, which reduced the effectiveness of their firing.

Next day the British cannon succeeded in bringing the collapse of the Darya Buruj, which was triangular in shape. The staff of the flag hoisted on it fell down. All the stores and the baggage housed in that Buruj were damaged. To the south of the Darya Buruj at a bittle distance was Ganga Buruj. That was also severely damaged. The bastions on the southern and north western side of the fort were damaged and the garrison could not take shelter behind them. So

the whole Maratha garrison rushed to the Hanumant Buruj. When this was happening, the Maratha forces outside remained inactive. Anandrao Ram's men were fighting single handed against the British artillery fire.[60]

When the exchange of fire was going on between the two sides, a cannon ball from inside the fort exploded very near the place where Commodore Watson was standing. It drove dust into his eyes and a stone struck his arm, which accident prevented him from taking further active part in the siege.[61] The Maratha artillery fire killed and wounded five or six of the artillery men.[62]

Gordon ordered an addition of two guns, one of 18 and the other of 12 pounder to his 24 pounders. The distance of the British positions from the fort now was nearly three hundred yards. While erecting his batteries Gordon had a doubt of a nearby ditch, which was found out by Captain Maclean. It was about 15 ft deep and twenty wide and in very good condition.

While the encounters between the two parties were going on, Naro Appaji Keskar, Nana's officer at Pune, despatched Bapuji Hari and Dadopant Godbole with some infantry for the relief of the garrison of the Sashti fort. Visaji Krishna Biniwale, with a sizeable number of troops under his command, arrived at Khandala on the 22nd December. But instead of marching in person to the site of the battle, he sent a contingent of seven hundred cavalry under the command of Apaji Govind in the direction

of Sashti. The force reached Kalva the same day. Jotyaji Jadhavrao, son of Pilaji Jadhavrao, who had encamped at Kalve, met Apaji Govind. Apaji told Jotyaji that he would first survey the situation at the Thane fort and then decide the future course of action. Thus it seems that the Maratha officers did not understand the gravity of the situation, and were whiling away time instead of taking immediate action. In fact, they should have proceeded to the fort without delay.

The most unfortunate thing from the Maratha point of view was that the Maratha commanders and officers were too engrossed in the Raghoba-Barbhai conflict to evolve any well-thought out and systematic plan of the defence of the fort of Sashti. Let alone the defence of Sashti, they were not prepared for a large-scale war with the English, if the Bombay Government so thought of precipitating one. That the Bombay Government was not in a position to entangle itself in such a war due to its limited economic and military resources is a different matter. All the seasoned commanders of the Marathas like Mahadaji Shinde, Tukoji Holkar, Haripant Phadke, the Pawars, the Patwardhans, etc. were engaged in shedding blood of their own brethren and no one cared for the welfare of the Maratha State. Anandrao Ram Bivalkar, the commandant of the Sashti fort, had supplied correct information to Nana Phadnis through his agents and spies about the evil motives of the British and the numerical

strength of their army and naval units. In fact, two thirds of the Bombay garrison (both land and naval forces) was deployed by the Bombay Government in the operation against Sashti. With only one third of the garrison remaining for guard in the Bombay island, its defence had become very weak. Under such circumstances, if any one of the Maratha commanders like Haripant Phadke or Mahadaji Shinde had attacked that island with only ten to 15 thousand chosen horsemen in concert with the Maratha naval units, the British position at Bombay would have been difficult and the British forces at Sashti would have been compelled to leave that place for the defence of Bombay. But to undertake such an operation of counter offensive, a resourceful and dashing commander and organiser like Bajirao I was badly needed. Unfortunately for the Marathas, they had not a single commander of Bajirao's calibre during the first Anglo-Maratha War.

Whatever arrangements made by the Marathas for the defence of Sashti and its surrounding area were haphazard and showed lack of co-ordination and purpose. The cavalry unit of Shahaji Bhonsale of Akkalkot was directed by Naro Appaji Keskar to Sashti when the former was proceeding towards Pandharpur.[63] Janoji Dhulap[64] was asked to keep a watch on the Portuguese at Goa and send some ships to the rescue of Sashti. Janoji stationed himself at the fort of Vijaydurg to guard against the Portuguese with two pāls,

(the biggest Maratha warships having two or three masts) three gurabs and five gallivats and sent Krishnaji Dhulap[65] with three gurabs and five gallivats towards Sashti.[66] Raghoji Angre[67] was also ordered to proceed to Sashti with his naval units, but he waited for Dhulap's ships till the 26th December.[68] If Dhulaps and Angres had advanced expeditiously, their joint navy would have been able to intercept the British ships and at least kept them engaged till the succours from land routes arrived at Thane. Succour sent by Nana to Sashti arrived very late. The Maratha officers and commanders sent by Nana did not dare to attack the British till more troops arrived. That shows how the morale of the Maratha forces outside the fort was at its low ebb. The weak central government was the main cause of lethargy on the part of the Maratha commanders. Due to the Raghoba-Barbhai struggle, many of them were perplexed as to whose orders they should obey. ~~Due to~~ On account of the resulting vascillation, they were acting according to the dictates of the changing circumstances. But thanks to the bravery and gallantry of Anandrao Ram, the fort garrison did not lose its morale in spite of the early setbacks caused by the British bombardment.

An incident happened on the 22nd December, showing how the morale of the Maratha forces had gone down against the British artillery. Some of the gardis under the command of Antaji Shivdeo, attacked some of the British positions, but instantly fled away as the British guns opened fire on

them.[69] The British had by now practically blocked the fort from all sides.

When Gordon found that a breach was made by his artillery into the fort wall, he ordered his troops to fill up the ditch which he had noticed some time back. But the constant fire from the fort frustrated his plans repeatedly. At last, due to the British artillery fire, Ganga Buruj, the bastion on the western corner of the Darya Buruj, which formed the southern part of the Thane fort, collapsed into the ditch below, which the British were trying to fill up. The heap of earth of which the bastion was constructed, helped to fill up the ditch to a certain extent. Taking advantage of this, Gordon decided to fill up the ditch completely. Accordingly, a party of two hundred soldiers and thirty seamen, covered by the 2nd Grenadier Company, advanced to the counter scarp, loaded with sand-bags. They persisted with the work for nearly two hours with the utmost steadiness under the incessant fire from the breach. The British made three attacks, but they were repulsed by terrific fire from the garrison. A number of British sepoys and officers were killed and wounded. Gordon was obliged to order a retreat before the passage across the ditch could be completed. In this encounter, Vithal Bhaskar, Manaji Khanvilkar, Ramajirao Ghatge, Raghu Savant and Ram Savant distinguished themselves as great gunners on the Maratha side.[70]

When the Maratha garrison was fighting gallantly, the

Maratha troops outside remained silent. Visajipant Bhiniwale arrived at Taloje[71] on the 25th. While he himself was guilty of advancing slowly, he wrote a letter to Raghuji Angre, Janoji Dhulap and other Maratha officers, to arrive at Sashti as quickly as possible.[72]

While the Maratha garrison was trying to give a fitting reply to the wanton British aggression against Sashti on the battlefield, Nana and other Karbharis did not lose sight of other means and ways to counteract the British treachery. Considering that the British nation was basically a nation depending mainly on trade and commerce, the Marathas applied an economic blockade to the ports of Surat and Bombay in the following ways: (1) The Maratha officers like Naro Anandrao, Gopal Naik Tambavekar,[73] Janardan Rayaji, etc. were to keep their forces on the outskirts of Surat and not to allow any supplies from outside to enter the city. (2) Bahiro Raghunath was to see that no supplies from Surat went in the direction of Bombay. (3) Fattesingh Gaikwad and some kamavisdars were informed that they should take possession of all the Mahals outside Surat and collect revenues from them. (4) The officers at Surat were to send their clerks and cavalry units to the creeks of Jambusar, Amod and Ghoge in Gujarat, through which Surat received its supplies. (5) Chouth was to be collated from the Nawab of Surat. (6) The city of Surat was to be encircled from all sides, and its supplies were to be looted. (7) Bajirao

(7) Bahiro Raghunath was to stay at Surat and station his forces there. The expenses of these forces were to be taken from the Nawab of Surat in lieu of the possession of that city. (8) Raghuji Angre was to detain supplies being taken to Bombay from the neighbouring coast. This blockade was soon applied to the whole of the coastal trade. The purpose was to starve the British at Bombay. (9) The British share of the revenue of Surat was to be confiscated.[74]

The measures for economic blockade of the British on the western coast was a desperate measure taken by the Marathas when they realised their military inability to drive away the British from Sashti. It was a purely defensive measure. But against a trading nation like England, it was bound to be most effective. The conclusion is borne out by the English records that the economic blockade of Surat, more than anything else, was able to thwart the British designs on the west coast and bring them to agree to more friendly terms with the Maratha State.

While the Maratha efforts were going on speedily for an economic blockade of the British, the siege of Sashti was heading towards a crisis. On the 26th December, at night the British cannonading against the fort of Thane was the heaviest. The Darukhana or the store of the ammunition was located to the east of the Gagan Buruj[74-A] inside the fort. Due to the British cannonading, the bastions near this Buruj collapsed and thus another breach was made. Under such circumstances,

a chance shot blew up a small magazine and destroyed the Portuguese Church within the fort, just to the left of the breach. Anandrao Ram instantly extinguished the fire caught by the ammunition.[75]

In the meanwhile, Visaji Krishna Binivale reached Sashti from Taloje on the 26th December. He collected all his forces near Kalva. From Kalva he made a survey of the whole fort of Thane. He found that the British had permanently erected two batteries, one on the north western and the other on the southern side. On the eastern side was the creek. Only from the northern side the Marathas could enter the fort and return outside. Visaji Krishna wanted to bring cannon on the Kalva side and destroy the batteries erected by the British. But he had no field artillery with him. Besides, for the purpose of erecting batteries, he could not find Beldars or stone-diggers, carpenters, blacksmiths, etc. He complained in one of his letters, "If I try to bring bigārīs[76] from the surrounding areas, it is not possible, because all the inhabitants have joined the British."[77] This particular remark shows how the Marathas antagonised their own people by looting them during the time of war as well as peace.

There was a ray of hope for Anandrao Ram when he got the news that Visaji Krishna had arrived at Sashti with a large force. But he was very much disappointed when Visaji-pant advised him to continue to fight patiently for another

four days. Anandrao, however, knew in the heart of his heart that the garrison had fought upto its extreme limits. There were 43 guns in the fort, but they had been rendered ineffective due to the enemy fire. In the face of all odds, Anandrao had repulsed three British attacks. But on the 28th December, the British made their last assault on the fort and at 3 o' clock in the noon captured it. The last assault was made by Col. Cockburn, in which both the officers and sepoys behaved with the utmost spirit. Anandrao Ram Bivalkar, his family and two hundred other men were captured by the British.[79]

While the Bombay Government had sent the major part of its forces for the capture of the Thane fort, it did not lose sight of the islands and forts surrounding the island of Sashti, which were strategically important. On the evening of the 20th December, a separate detachment under the command of Lt. Col. Keating was sent to reduce the fort of Vesava (Versova), a strong fort and outpost on the west coast of Sashti. Keating twice attempted to escalade the fort, but due to ~~the~~ alertness and bravery of the Maratha garrison, he failed. At last he decided to erect a battery for his 18 pounders. On the 24th December, the battery was ready to fire at sunrise, when the garrison sent out a deputation for negotiations and on the 25th December, the fort surrendered to the English.

On the 28th December, Keating was sent by the Bombay

Government to reduce the island of Karanja. In this expedition, Keating met with the greatest difficulty, that of gaining the hillock on the island. He had never met with such a one before. On the night of the 29th December, the British posts were established within two hundred and fifty yards of the hillock and on the 30th morning within fifty yards. The garrison instantly surrendered.

With the reduction of the fort of Vesavd (Versova), all strategically important points on the island of Sashti fell into the British hands and the island became safe for the British. The conquest of the island thus came to an end.

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While the siege of the fort of Sashti was in progress in December 1774, the Maratha forces of the Barbhais, under the command of Haripant Phadke, were hotly pursuing Raghoba and his partisans, who were running in the direction of Malwa and Gujrat. Raghoba, plagued by the fear of the forces under Haripant and acute money shortage, went to Surat for the British help. He concluded a treaty with them, known as the Treaty of Surat, on the 6th March, 1775. According to the main provisions of this treaty, the English were to assist Raghoba with a military contingent of 2,500 men of which at least 700 were to be Europeans. Raghoba stipulated to pay to the English Company 75,000 rupees annually from the revenue of Ankleshwar. He also agreed to pay one and a half lakh rupees monthly for the military assistance which he was to

receive as security, for the payment of which he made temporary assignment of the districts Amod, Hansot, Versaul and a part of Ankleshwar. He was to deposit jewels valued at 6 lakh rupees to the English as a security for the promised advance, pledging himself to redeem them. He was also to cede to the English in perpetuity, Vasai, Sashti, Jambusar, Olpad and small islands adjacent to Bombay. He ~~also~~ further engaged to procure for the Company the Gaikwad's share of the revenues of the town and pargana of Bhadoch.[80]

By this treaty Raghoba virtually sold the Maratha State to the British. He gave them the opportunity to interfere in the internal affairs of the Marathas, which they would not have got in the normal course. The Bombay Government was thinking that their disciplined and well-trained infantry and artillery, in conjunction with the fairly good cavalry of Raghoba, would inflict a speedy defeat on the irregular and untrained bands of Maratha horse under Haripant and instal Raghoba on the Peshwaship within a short time. But their underestimate of the Maratha military prowess proved to be their undoing. Their fond hopes were strongly belied by the gallant resistance of the Marathas. What seemed to them like an encounter of short duration turned out to be a full-scale long-protracted war.

Before the treaty of Surat was completed, the Bombay Government had assembled troops under Colonel Keating who arrived at Surat by sea on the 27th February 1775. He was instructed to assist Raghoba against the Barbhais and to do

everything to bring the war to a speedy conclusion.[81]

Keating, with Raghoba, moved towards Khambayat,[82] where he expected to meet Govindrao Gaikwad, Khanderao Gaikwad and other officers of Raghoba with their armies. Leaving Surat on the 15th March, he arrived at Khambayat on the 17th. Govindrao was at this time stationed at Palanpur, some eighty miles to the north of Ahmedabad, with about 25,000 men. On the 20th, he had an interview with the Nawab of Khambayat, who declared to render the English every assistance in his power. While at Khambayat, Keating's detachment was reinforced by the arrival of two companies of grenadiers and one battalion of sepoys from Madras, which made the stipulated complement of 2500 men. The Barbhai's army under Haripant lay at this time encamped at a distance of about six miles from Khambayat.[83] It was at Khambayat that Raghoba's followers, variously estimated from 20 to 40 thousand collected, but most of them had returned in the hope of receiving their arrears, and were mutinous and clamorous. Keating's estimate was that there were among them some 11,000 good horse and 4000 foot, "a body in every respect good enough to accomplish all we wish."[84]

From the 19th April to the 23rd, the joint detachments of Keating and Raghoba camped at Darra,[85] an arid plain of bare trees and exposed to the blasts of hot winds. On the 23rd April, Keating left Darra with Raghoba and the whole of his army then moved in the direction of the river Sabarmati towards the enemy post and by evening on the 24th crossed it

without encountering any difficulty or opposition from the Marathas.[86] It then started moving along the bank of Sabarmati. The movement was extremely slow - it took ten days to cover a distance of 20 miles. The army was overloaded with carts, baggage and bazaar. The commanding officer knew nothing about the way the armies moved in the battlefields. In fact, he was being dragged on by Raghoba, who knew the futility of attempting an invasion of Pune at a time when he was actually being pursued by a big army under Haripant Phadke, and wanted to station at Ahmedabad during the rains. Haripant's army consisted of some 30,000 soldiers, out of which there were 17 or 18 thousand fairly good dependable soldiers belonging to the main Pune army (Huzrat) and the battalions contributed by Patwardhan, Raste, Panse and other Maratha sardars.

Haripant had been well-trained in the traditional Maratha tactics of ganimī kāvā. He studiously avoided an open combat. His soldiers kept on hovering on the flanks of the English army and brought more than usual pressure on the army of Raghoba, but whenever Keating took resort to firing, they quickly scattered themselves in various directions and made an open engagement impossible. Haripant's tactics, of suddenly hitting and quick dispersal, kept the English marching on and created in them a false impression that the Marathas were a cowardly people and would break down easily whenever they could be forced to fight a pitched battle. There were a couple of minor encounters between the English

army and Haripant's forces on the 28th April and 2nd May 1775. The first took place near the village of Hasamli.[87] The destruction of crops and the burning of all food and provision, known in military parlance as scorched earth policy, as a part of the Maratha mode of warfare was in full operation in Keating's Gujrat campaign. "At Hasamli," writes Major Forbes, who had taken part in the Gujrat campaign, "the confederates had cut down the trees and destroyed the villages and burnt all the corn."[88] In this encounter the British army took the offensive. Its cannonading lasted for a little over two hours, but due to strategical handicaps in its position - the river or a branch of it being in between - and the English being fatigued with a long, hot march, it could not pursue the advantage. In the encounter at Hasamli, Captain Steuart, who later became famous in the battle of Talegao of 1779, and Lieutenant Torriano fought so gallantly in repulsing the Marathas, that Keating publicly thanked them.[88-a] From Hasamli Keating's army arrived on the west bank of the river Watrie and after crossing it, moved towards Kaira,[89] a large town situated at the confluence of the Serrie and Watrie rivers. Here the second encounter with the Pune army took place. This time the offensive was taken by Haripant's forces. Keating ordered his line to halt, wheel round and receive them. His fire soon checked the advance of the Maratha army and an attack on the left flank of his army was repulsed. But the English again failed to pursue the Marathas, due to the roughness of the ground and the small number of luscars to move their guns. The

Pune army retreated in some confusion. Raghoba lost 50 or 60 of his men, which was enough to demoralise his army for the remaining period of the battle.[90]

Colonel Keating was gradually becoming conscious of his difficulties. His army was moving at a terribly slow pace, encumbered as it was with a large bazaar and baggage. In his encounter with the Peshwa army, Keating had observed how lightly and therefore rapidly, the latter moved. He therefore, decided to change the route, which was leading him into Gujrat and take up the direct route to Pune. The allied army of Raghoba and the British left Mahtur[91] on the 5th May. The very next day they had an encounter with the Marathas near the village of Hejrabad.[92] On the 7th May the allied armies left Hejrabad, directing their march towards Nadiad,[93] the principal town belonging to Govindrao Gaikwad. On finding the English taking a southern direction, the Marathas sent detachments to burn the villages and to drain wells and lakes, so that all the villages around the British forces were in flames and the smoke of distant towns and hamlets indicated their further ravages.[94]

On the 14th May the army marched out of Nadiad and on the 18th it moved from Nappar.[95] On the outskirts of Nappar, on the famous plains of Adas, where Raghoba had received his last signal defeat at the hands of the Peshwa army on the 17th February, the Maratha army suddenly appeared on the rear of the allied army in two solid divisions and started a smart cannonading. The English were quick in replying[96]

and were able to silence the Maratha cannon and disperse their cavalry with considerable loss. The Marathas, however, returned at full speed with their artillery and rushing with a large body of cavalry towards the English advance party, formed themselves very near the English guns. Colonel Keating was able to repulse the attack with round and case shots and ~~with~~ musketry. The Marathas then made a second charge, more desperate than the first. This too was repulsed, but many of the grenadiers including Captains Myers and Serle, were cut down. The Marathas had thus been repulsed both in the front and at the rear with great loss. The losses of the English were insignificant. At this moment the first company of European Grenadiers suddenly decided to go to the right and make a running march or retreat from the ground. The Marathas, observing this, rode towards them, sword in hand and cut a great number of them to pieces. As soon as Keating saw that his soldiers were in disorder due to the charge of the Marathas, he tried to give them cover of his artillery fire for retreat. What Keating had lost as a general, he tried to recoup as a commandant of artillery. He launched upon an amazing slaughter with the help of his artillery. A number of Maratha soldiers were killed by the British firing.[97]

The English and the Marathas both claimed the battle of Adas as their victory. "The victory," however, as Forbes wrote, "was dearly purchased: out of fifteen British officers in the advanced division, seven were killed and four wounded,

besides a great many native officers and two hundred sepoys. We also had to lament eighty Europeans killed and missing, mostly grenadiers."[98] According to Keating's estimate, the English loss was 'greater than ever was known in India.'

The Maratha loss was heavier still. A number of leading Maratha sardars were killed or wounded. Maloji Ghorpade Mudholkar was seriously wounded. His brother Ranoji was killed. Jayavantrao Panse[99] was badly injured in firing. Anandrao Gopal and his son both sustained wounds. Among the Patwardhans, Janoba Subhedar and Balwantrao redeived sword cuts and rifle wounds. Syed Husain, the commandant of Haripant's artillery, was killed.[100] Altogether, 30 officers of high rank, each entitled at least to the command of horsemen, and two hundred horses were killed or wounded. Haripant himself was shot through the arm with a musket ball.[101]

As the monsoon approached, Raghoba and his allies pitched their camp at Dabhai[102] and Haripant retired to Songad.[103]

The battle of Adas was a duel between the old Maratha mode of <u>ganīmī kāvā</u> and the modern European mode of disciplined warfare. Neither party scored a convincing victory over the other. The British were never able to bring the Marathas to a pitched battle and destroy their military strength, nor the Marathas had any effective answer to British infantry and artillery. Both the parties were compelled to wait for a further showdown and trial of strength.

It became clear from the siege of the fort of Sashti and the battle of Adas that the war so light-heartedly under-

taken by the Bombay Government was not going to be a short and an easy affair, as they had expected. The matters were further complicated at this time by the nature of the Company's administration.

During this period, Warren Hastings was at first the Governor of Bengal, but soon he became the Governor General or the Supreme head of the three Presidencies of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras by the Regulating Act of the British Parliament of 1773.

As soon as Hastings assumed supreme power at Calcutta on the 26th October, 1774, he communicated the change to the Bombay authorities, but the slowness of communication in those days created unforeseen difficulties. The fort of Sashti (Thane) was captured on the 29th December 1774, but no news of that event was sent to Calcutta till 31st March, 1775. Further no notice was taken by the Bombay Government of the changes brought in by the Regulating Act, according to which the capture of the fort of Thane was unauthorised. But before the official communication reached Calcutta, the news of that incident and of the forces sent to Raghoba's support was known to Warren Hastings, who, on the 8th March 1775, addressed a strong remonstrance to Bombay, reminding the President that he had acted without authority by contracting the Treaty of Surat and calling upon the Bombay authorities to withdraw their forces and stop the war they had started. The Bombay Government received this remonstration on the 21st May at a time when the two hostile forces were locked in a

deadly combat in north Gujrat. The Bombay authorities took no notice of these orders of the Supreme Government and in open defiance of them continued the war on their own account.

Hastings, on the 10th July, wrote to the Pune Administration the purport of his Council's letter to Bombay and added that he was soon sending to Pune a trusted and competent agent of his own to stop the war and negotiate a friendly understanding with the Marathas. The Pune Administration welcomed this move, which was resented by the Bombay Government.

Hastings then sent Colonel Upton to Pune, who, after a long period of negotiations with the Pune Administration, concluded a treaty on the 1st March 1776, which is known as the Treaty of Purandar. According to the terms of this treaty, the fort of Sashti with the island of Sashti was to remain in the British possession. The Pune government was to pay to the English Rupees twelve lakhs in cash for the expenses they had incurred on account of Raghoba. Raghoba was to receive an allowance of Rs. three lakhs and fifteen thousand annually for his maintenance and to withdraw completely from the State affairs. The English were to retain the territory they had conquered in Gujrat and ~~to~~ cease to interfere with the Gaikwad's affairs.

With the conclusion of the Treaty of Purandar, the first phase of the first Anglo-Maratha War came to an end.

Notes

1-7 Forrest, M.S., pp. 255-56; 261-62; Pechells: A Historical Account, pp. 1-10.

8 General Letter, Bombay, 18th March, 1768.

9 S.P.D.D., No. 15, pp. 44-46.

10 Bom. Select Committee, 28th November, 1774.

11 Clausewitz, On War, Vol. I, pp. 2, 3. Clausewitz was a Prussian writer of the early 19th century, whose military writings, especially his book on 'War' holds a singular position in the history of military thought. He is regarded as one of the founders of modern military thought.

12 Ibid., pp. 120-123.

13 General Jomini was a Swiss officer in the French Service during Napoleonic period. He is supposed to be one of the great interpreters of Nepoleon and one of the founders of modern military thought.

14 Major General F. Maurice: British Strategy, p. 27.

15 Liddel Hart, a British military thinker and writer, was a captain of infantry during the first World War and a military correspondent of 'Times' in 1937.

16 Forrest, M.S., p. 179.

16-a Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency, Vol. 14, pp.348-49, 360.

16-b S.P.D. Vol. 35, No. 64; Forrest, M.S., pp. 190, 198.

17 Forrest, M.S., p. 179.

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18 Gazetteer of Bombay Presidency, Vol. 14 (1882), p.361.

19 Anandrao Ram Bivalkar was the son of Ramaji Mahadeo Bivalkar, who was the Subhedar of Kalyan during the period of Peshwa Bajirao I. Anandrao Ram was the Mamlatdar of Taluka Sashti and was residing in the fort of Thane. He was also acting as the commandant of the fort of Sashti.

20 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L. No. 61.

21 Old Kurla was about one mile to the west of Ghatkopar on the southern boundary of the Sashti island.

22 This Mahal was an old administrative unit, which is not in existence at present. Most probably it was to the extreme south of the Sashti island.

23 The port of Sion (Sheeva in Marathi = boundary) was the northernmost boundary of the Bombay island in the 18th century. It was about two and a half miles to the south-west of old Kurla.

24 A village one and quarter mile to the east of Thane.

25 About 1 mile to the south of the Thane fort.

26 A kind of ship, galabat.

27 The port of Hareli is on the east coast of the Sashti island about 6 miles to the south-west of the Thane fort and three miles to the north-east of Ghatkopar.

28 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L.61, p. 53.

29 Ibid.

30 Son of Pilaji Jadhavrao, who was the famous sardar of Chhatrapati Shahu I.

31 Shivrao Hari Nevalkar was the son of Hari Damodar Nevalkar, who hailed from the village Kota near Rajapur in Ratnagiri district. The famous Rani of Jhansi was his daughter-in-law (Historical Genealogies, p. 52).

32 A village one mile to the north of the Thane fort.

33 In Marathi letter it is mentioned as 'sarkārwāḍā', where the Marathas used to hold their Darbar, when Ramaji Mahadeo Bivalkar was the Subhedar of Kalyan during Bajirao I's Peshwaship.

34 Private residential place of Ramaji Mahadeo.

35 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L. Nos. 61, 32, 22, 21, 36.

36 Forrest, M.S., p. 186.

37 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L. 61.

38 Forrest, M.S., p. 187.

39 A Gurab is a vessel of two or three masts, very broad in proportion to their length and of three hundred tons.

40 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L. Nos. 61 and 36.

41 Forrest, M.S., p. 187.

42 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L. Nos. 46, 41, 39, 38, 37.
Visaji Krishna Chinchalkar, a Karhada Brahmin came to prominence during Peshwa Madhavrao I's period in the affairs of north India. It was he who received on behalf of the Chhatrapati the rights of vazirship bestowed by the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam in September 1771 and installed Shah Alam on the throne of Delhi in 1773.

43 The hill-fort of Rajmachi is about 6 miles to the north of Khandala Ghat or Borghat in Pune District.

44 The hill-fort of Mahuli is about 6 miles to the north-west of Shahpur, Taluka Shahpur, District Thane.

45 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L. Nos. 36, ~~61~~, 39, 61

46 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L. Nos. 44 and 61.

47 Ibid., L. Nos. 57, 61.

48 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L. Nos. 58 and 61.

49 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L. Nos. 40, 61.

50 The name of this fort is given as Yashwantgad in S.P.D., Vol. 35, L. 37, p. 31.

51 Forrest, M.S., pp. 188-89.

52 These were only small walled enclosures with towers near the fort of Sashti. In Marathi they have been called Pāṇaburūja (bastions built in water).

53 Forrest, M.S., p. 197.

54 Forrest, M.S., pp. 190, 198.

55 Walled enclosures built for the protection of the Sashti fort (Pāṇaburūja) on its northern side.

56 Forrest, M.S., p. 199.

57 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L. No. 62.

58 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L. No. 63.

59 Holes in the bastion of a fort kept for firing at the enemy outside the fort. In Marathi they were called Jangyās.

60 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L. No. 64.

61 Forrest, M.S., p. 200.

62 Forrest, M.S., pp. 191, 200.

63 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L.No. 75.

64-65 Krishnaji Dhulap was the eldest son of Harji Dhulap and Janrao was the younger brother of Krishnaji. The Dhulap family was in charge of the Peshwa's navy since the time of Peshwa Madhavrao I.

66 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L. No. 76.

67 Raghuji Angre was Manaji Angre's son and Kanhoji Angre's grandson.

68 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L. Nos. 83, 99, 100.

69 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L. Nos. 72, 78.

70 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L. Nos. 82, 89, 92, 96; Forrest, M.S., p. 194.

71 A village about fourteen miles to the south-east of Thane in Kolaba District.

72 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L. 94.

73 A Deshastha Brahmin, who hailed from village Tambave on the banks of the Krishna river in Valve Taluka of Satara District. He was a moneylender and earned lakhs of rupees on the money-lending business during Peshwa Madhavrao I's period.

74 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L.Nos. 67, 81, 89, 91, 111, 125, 183, 86, 88, 102, 113, 149; Peshwa Diaries VI, Vol.II, pp. 5-16.

74-A The Gagan Buruj was the inner Buruj of the Thane fort. It cannot be exactly located.

75 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L. No. 97.

76 Hired labourers.

77 S.P.D., Vol. 35, L. No. 108.

78 Forest, M.S., p. 201.

79 Forest, M.S., p. 202.

80 Forrest, M.S., pp. 211-215.

81 Forrest, M.S., pp. 215-217.

82 Khambayat is about 52 miles to the south of Ahmedabad.

83 Forrest, M.S., p. 220.

84 Forrest, M.S., pp. 220-221.

85 A village about 85 miles to the east of Bhadoch.

86 Forbes: Oriental Memoirs, Vol. I, p. 362.

87 Forrest, M.S., pp. 221-222; Hasamli is about ten miles to the south of Kaira.

88 Oriental Memoirs, Vol. I, p. 365.

[Major Forbes: born in 1749: went out to Bombay in 1765: was Private Secretary to Col. Keating in 1775 and Chaplain force in the Gujarat, campaign: Published his 'Oriental Memoirs' in four volumes (1813-1815): Montalembert, the historian, was his grandson: died in 1819 (N.B.I, p. 149).]

88-A Ibid.

89 Kaira is about 20 miles to the south-east of Ahmedabad.

90 Forrest, M.S., pp. 222-23.

91 About 14 miles to the south of Kaira.

92 Forbes, Oriental Memoirs, Vol. I, p. 372.

93 About 15 miles to the south-east of Kaira.

94 Ibid., pp. 374-75

95 About 12 miles to the south of Nadiad.

96 S.P.D., Vol. 36, L. 218.

97 Forbes, Oriental Memoirs, Vol. I, pp. 383-385.

98 Ibid., pp. 384-85.

99 Jayavantrao Panase was the second son of Yashwantrao Panase and the younger brother of Bhivrao Yashwant Panase.

100 A.L. Vol. 5, p. 2244.

101 Ibid.

102 About 16 miles to the south-east of Badoda (Baroda).

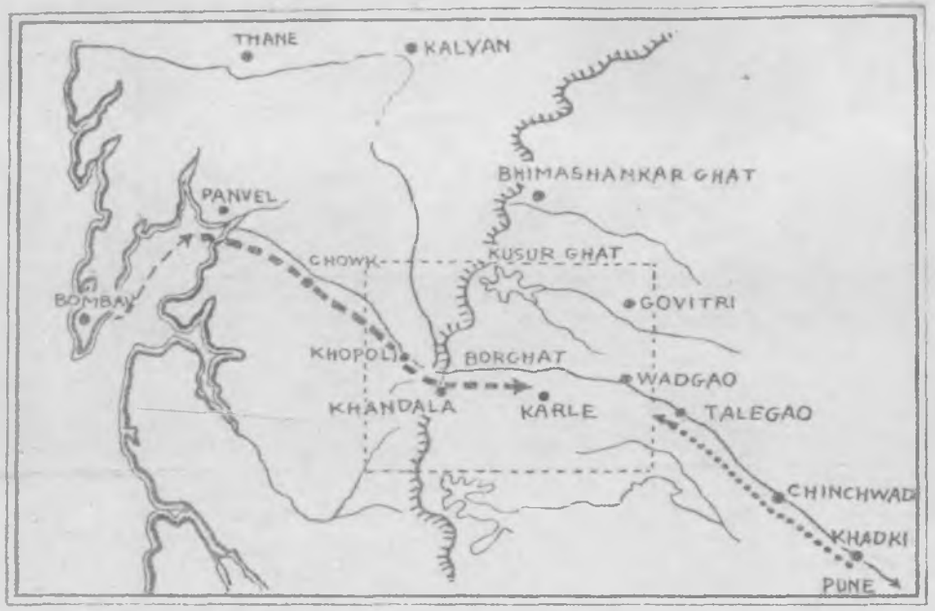
103 About 45 miles to the east of Surat.

THE FIRST ANGLO-MARATHA WAR

SECOND PHASE (1776-1779)

Chapter IV - THE FIRST BORGHAT EXPEDITION (1778-79)

For geographical references see Map Nos. 7 to 10, attached at the beginning of this chapter, between pp. 105A-106.



MAP NO. 7

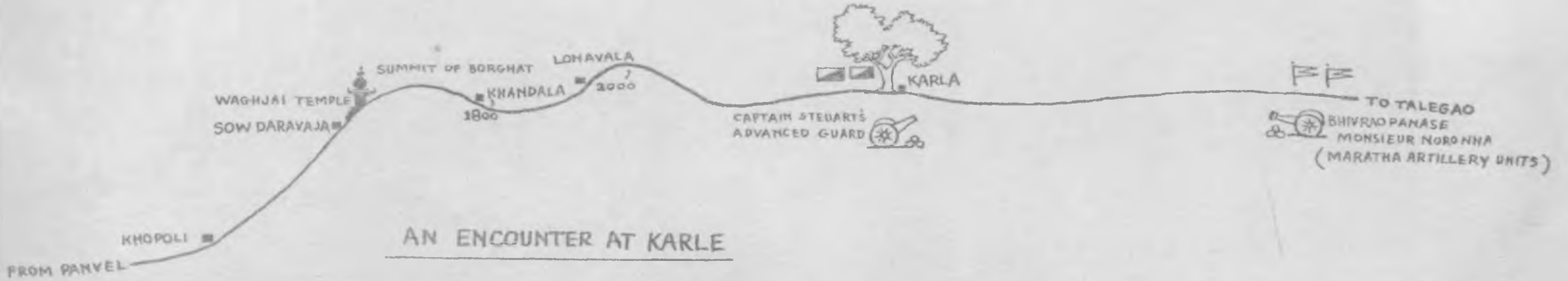
ROUTE OF MARATHA ARMY

ROUTE OF BRITISH ARMY

12 0 12

1 INCH = 12 MILES

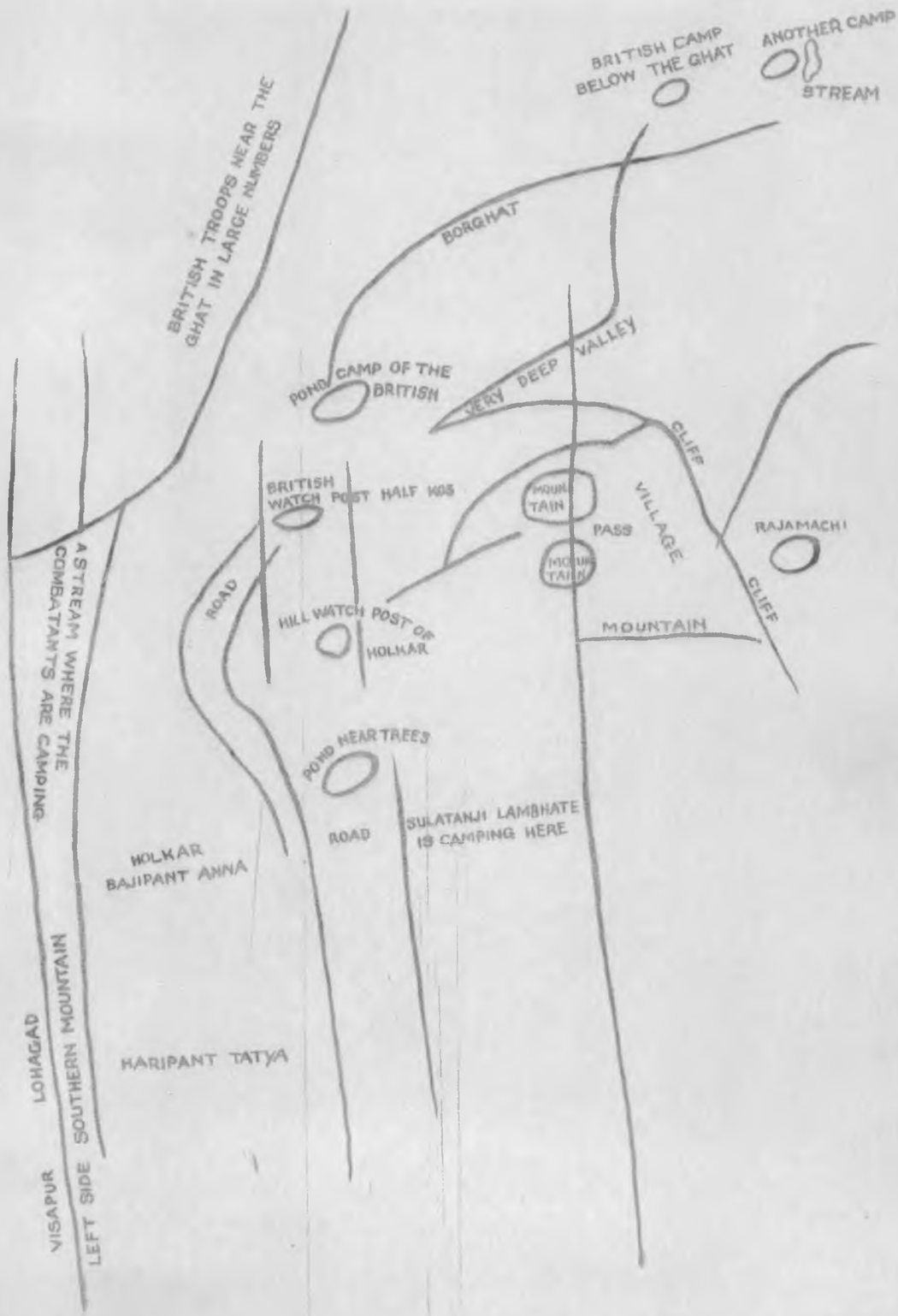
BATTLE OF TALEGAO (1778-79): ROUTES OF MARATHA & BRITISH ARMIES



AN ENCOUNTER AT KARLE

MAP NO-8

A SKETCH OF AN OLD MARATHA MAP SHOWING MARATHA & BRITISH POSITIONS NEAR BORGHAT (1778-79)



[REPRODUCED FROM THE MAP IN THE D.C.H.C.

NOTE - ORIGINAL MARATHI NAMES IN MODI SCRIPT

MAP NO. 9

THE ADVANCE OF THE BRITISH FORCES TO TALEGAO

(9TH. JANUARY 1779)

BRITISH POSITIONS AT TALEGAO

COLONEL HARTLEY'S ADVANCED GUARD

MAIN BODY OF INFANTRY

RAGHOBA'S TROOPS AND GUNS

REAR GUARD UNDER CAPTAIN GORDON

BHAVRAO PANSE'S FLANK MOVEMENT TO ATTACK RAGHOBA

MARATHA POSITIONS AT TALEGAO

MARATHA ARTILLERY UNDER BHIVRAO PANSE AND MONSIEUR NORONHA (ADVANCE GUARD)

HILL

BAJI PANT ANNA JOSHI

RAMCHANDRA GANESH KANADE

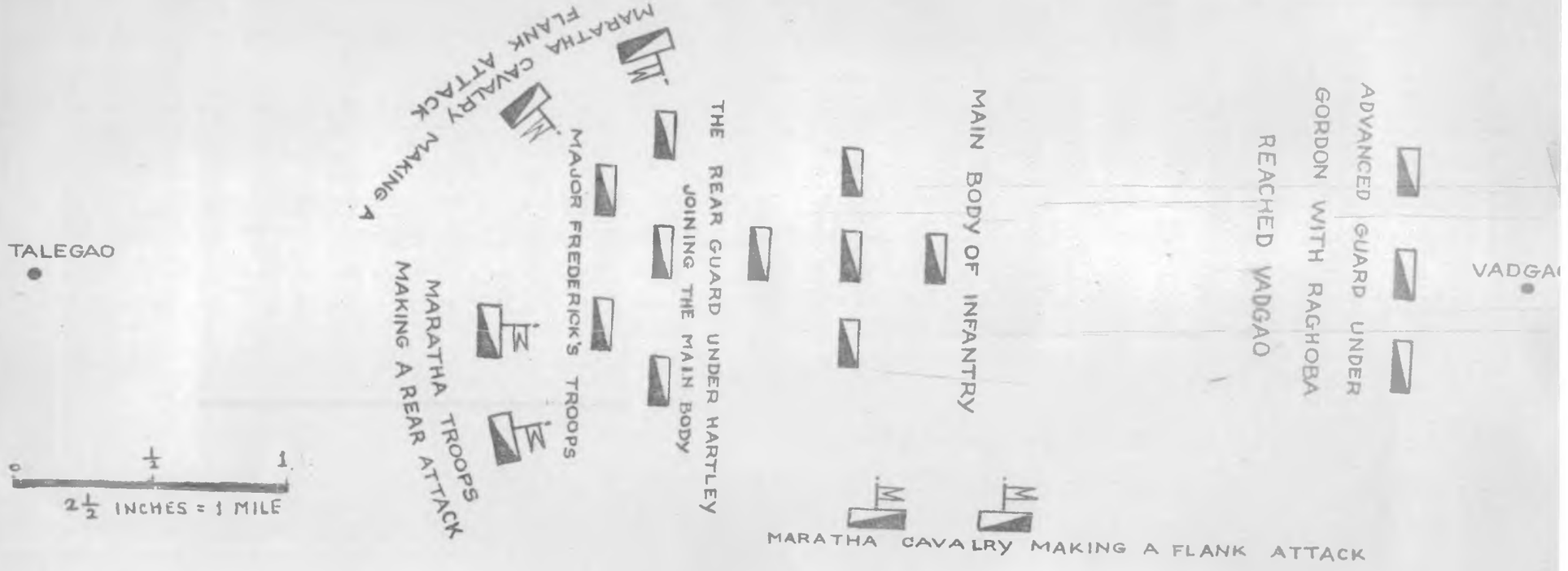
MAIN BODY OF MARATHA CAVALRY

TUKOJI HOLKAR MAHADAJI SHINDE HARIPANT PHADKE

MAP NO. 10

THE RETREAT OF THE BRITISH FORCES FROM TALEGAO TO VADGAO

(11 TH AND 12 TH JANUARY 1779)


TALEGAO
VADGAO
ADVANCED GUARD UNDER GORDON WITH RAGHOBA REACHED VADGAO
MAIN BODY OF INFANTRY
THE REAR GUARD UNDER HARTLEY JOINING THE MAIN BODY
MAJOR FREDERICK'S TROOPS
MARATHA TROOPS MAKING A REAR ATTACK
MARATHA CAVALRY MAKING A FLANK ATTACK
MARATHA CAVALRY FLANK ATTACK MAKING
0
1/2
1
2 1/2 INCHES = 1 MILE

CHAPTER IV

THE FIRST BORGHAT EXPEDITION (1778-79)

After the conclusion of the treaty of Purandar in March 1776, the second phase of the first Anglo-Maratha War started. This phase resulted in engaging the Marathas and the British in another round of military conflict and ended with the treaty of Vadgao in January 1779.

The Bombay Government's reaction to the terms of the treaty of Purandar of 1776 was bitter. They considered these terms detrimental to their interests and decided not to implement the treaty. In open defiance of the Supreme Council's order, they gave full protection to Raghoba and later hobnobbed with the Pretender,[1] two inveterate enemies of the Maratha State.

The Bombay Government's breach of the treaty of Purandar was disliked by the Pune Darbar. In order to counteract the Bombay Government's misdeeds, Nana Phadnis accorded a friendly welcome to St. Lubin, who called himself a representative of the Government of France and visited Pune on the 26th April, 1776. Nana and the other Karbharis had several meetings with St. Lubin. M. Le Chevalier de Saint - Lubin was no stranger to India. He had served as Third Surgeon on the vessels of the French East India Company. In 1766 he came to Bombay via Basra and then proceeded to Mangalore, where he entered into Haidar Ali's service. He next came to Madras where he

became a friend of John Call, an engineer, in the service of the East India Company. On his return to France, he ingratiated himself to the confidence of Monsieur de Sartine, Minister for the Navy, by presenting several mémoirs on the political situation of India. On the 10th January 1775 Lubin submitted to the Ministers of France a plan for a treaty of alliance to be concluded with the Marathas. In March 1776 he was appointed an envoy of the French King for negotiating a commercial treaty with the Maratha Government.[2]

After several meetings with Lubin, the Pune Court entered into a treaty with him on the 18th June, 1777. By this treaty, the Peshwa gave assurance of full protection to all the French possessions in India. The Marathas also promised to place at the disposal of the French, 25,000 of their cavalry in case of an attack on the French establishments in India.[3] It was alleged that the basis of this agreement was to send out a body of troops from France to India to assist the Pune Government against its enemies.

Nana's exuberant zeal in welcoming St Lubin as compared with his coolness towards Mostyn, the British envoy at the Pune Court, was perhaps calculated to create an impression on the English that if they did not faithfully carry out the terms of the treaty, the Marathas would turn towards the French for help. Nana seems to have been sincerely convinced like Haidar Ali, that with the help of the French he might be able to offset the growing British aggression in

India. He certainly had no intension of breaking up relations with the English. But in making the show Nana overshot his mark. He did not take into consideration that the St Lubin fraud would provide the English with an excellent pretext for breaking the treaty of Purandar, against which the Bombay Government had been chafing for a long time.

At this time the parties at Pune were seething with discontent. The treasury of the Pune Government was low. Moroba Phadnis, the cousin brother of Nana, and one of the members of the Barbhais, had developed a bitter hatred towards Nana. Sakharam Bapu, Moroba and Chinto Vithal Rairikar[4] formed a trio against Nana. Overtures were made to Lewis, Deputy Resident of the English at Pune, by the party of Bapu, Moroba, Bajaba Purandare[4-a] and Tukoji Holkar for the Company's assistance to bring the ex-Peshwa Raghoba to Pune. The President and Council of Bombay had unanimously agreed to encourage the plan, in case Sakharam Bapu and other chiefs would make the application under their own seals and handwriting.[5] Dadoo Pant, an agent from Moroba, arrived at Bombay on the 5th January 1778, to negotiate with Governor Hornby for this purpose.[6]

So far the Calcutta Council had sympathy for the Pune Court in its dispute with the Bombay Government over the terms of the treaty of Purandar. But the St Lubin affair gave a new turn to its attitude towards the Marathas, which

henceforward became tough. The Calcutta Council now decided to approved the Bombay Government's resolution. On the 2nd February 1778, the Calcutta Council resolved that the President and Council of Bombay were warranted by the treaty of Purandar to join in a plan for conducting Raghunathrao to Pune on the application of the Pune Darbar.[7] They informed the Bombay Government that the object of their own policy was to prevent 'the growth of an influence dangerous to the Company's interests, to defeat the intentions of a party adverse to the Company and to promote security of the Company's possessions'.[8] On the 23rd February 1778, after an unusually warm debate, the Supreme Council issued orders for forming a detachment consisting of six battalions of sepoys, one company of native artillery, with the regular proportion of field artillery to which were afterwards added a regiment of cavalry and a body of 500 Kandahar horse supplied by the Nawab of Ayodhya. These forces were commanded by Colonel Leslie. He was instructed by the Supreme Council to proceed to Bombay via Bundelkhand and Warhad (Berar) Subhas, whose rulers were on friendly terms with the British.

Leslie, who set out in March 1778, instead of marching directly to Bombay with speed, wasted nearly seven months in fighting with the recalcitrant local chiefs in Bundelkhand. After his sudden death on the 3rd October 1778, the command of the Bengal army was placed in the hands of Thomas Goddard.[8-a] While Goddard's forces marched slowly through the Satpuda

and the Vindhya tracts, the Calcutta Government was preparing for its plans to detach the allies of the Peshwa from their allegiance to him and thus weaken the Maratha State. Thus the political strategy preceded the military strategy.

With the Bhonsales of Nagpur, the Bengal Government's relations were particularly close, so close that a regular correspondence had been kept up by Warren Hastings with Mudhoji Bhonsale directly as well as through Divakarpant Chorghade, Mudhoji's diwan. A close alliance with Mudhoji Bhonsale seemed to Hastings a very effective counterpart of a combination of the Pune Government, the Nizam and the French, which seemed to him threatening the British possessions on the Bombay coast, in Ayodhya and even in Bengal. He knew well that if a war had to be waged with the Maratha State, Goddard's forces would be inadequate to match the united strength of the three powers.[9] Further, an alliance with Mudhoji would divert the attention of the Pune Government and thus relieve ~~their~~ its pressure upon Bombay. The Supreme Government consequently appointed A.K. Elliot to carry on negotiations with Mudhoji. But before he could take up his work, he died on the 3rd October, 1778 due to inflamation of liver.[10]

After Elliot's death, Colonel Goddard was entrusted with the former's work of negotiating with Mudhoji. While at Hoshangabad, Goddard deputed Lt Watherstone to proceed to Nagpur and seek avenues for establishing a treaty with Mudhoji. Watherstone tried to lure Mudhoji with his alluring

talks. The latter, however, politely but firmly expressed his inability to enter into any action against the Pune Government, but was ceaselessly trying to urge upon the British the superior strength of the Pune Government and to come to terms with them.[11] Watherston's mission thus failed.

While these negotiations were going on, the Bombay Government had already decided on the 21st July, 1778 to reinstate Raghoba to the regency of Pune in view of their strained relations with the Marathas and the prospect of an approaching rupture with the French. However, upto the middle of October 1778 no preparations had been made at Bombay in this direction. Carnac, one of the members of the Bombay Council, submitted a minute on the 12th October. In that minute he urged the necessity of taking immediate action against the Marathas.[12] He was supported by Thomas Mostyn, who said that the supporters of Moroba must conclude, if this opportunity was let slip away, that Raghoba was given up by the English. Mostyn also emphasised that any further delay would give the French an opportunity of gaining influence at the Maratha Court. According to him, the sooner measures for placing Raghoba in the regency of the Pune Government were taken, the better. Of success, he was quite confident. He was also sure that as soon as the British ascended the Borghat, there would be defections on the Peshwa's side and one by one Mahadji Shinde, Tukoji Holkar and others would join the British army. It was this

bold optimism of Mostyn, which made the British believe that they would not meet with any serious opposition from the Marathas. The Bombay Government, therefore, decided to undertake an expedition to Pune.

Mostyn had worked at the Pune court as Resident from 1772. He had known the ins and outs of the Pune affairs. He had established contacts with a number of individuals in the Maratha society of Pune, who acted as his agents and spies and supplied him all the information he required about the activities of different Maratha leaders and officers. Mostyn's reputation and his first hand knowledge of Maratha politics at Pune carried weight in the Bombay Council.

It was resolved by the Bombay Council, Draper dissenting, that the resolution of the 21st July be carried into execution.[13] On the 4th November 1778, a Committee consisting of Carnac, Egerton and Mostyn was appointed to make every arrangement for conducting Raghoba to Pune and to settle with him the conditions on which the assistance was to be given. When the proposal for forming such a Committee had come forward, before the 4th November, Colonel Egerton, who did not suppose that the two civilians were to accompany him in the above capacity on the forthcoming expedition, had approved the measure, but afterwards he vainly protested against it. He thought that it was contrary to the orders of the Directors and derogatory to his position as a commanding officer.[14] Thus the Commander-in-Chief was

circumscribed in his designs and operations by the appointment of field-deputies. The success of military operations depends very much upon the unity of command, without which there can neither be prompt decision nor timely execution. To appoint field deputies who were bound to supercede the orders of the Commander-in-Chief, was undoubtedly a grave mistake on the part of the Bombay Government. Another mistake committed by the Company was that it was too much guided by the over-confidence and over-optimism of Mostyn, and flouted the simple general war principle that a concerted and united attack is better than a single-handed one and hastily undertook the expedition against the Pune Darbar even before Colonel Goddard joined them.

After taking the decision to send an expedition to Pune, the Bombay Council asked Captain James Steuart, Aid de Camp to the Governor of Bombay, to take a survey of the region between the fort of Belapur near Thane and Pune. Captain Steuart's report based on his survey gives interesting geographical details about the territories on both the sides of the Borghat as well as the Ghat itself. In his report he pointed out which roads and paths were fit for the march of the British infantry and artillery as well as the territories suitable for encamping. Steuart visited Pune, made a secret survey of the camps of Mahadji Shinde, Tukoji Holkar and Haripant Phadke. According to his estimate, the whole force of the Maratha commanders could not then

exceed seven or eight thousand horse in and out of the town of Pune.[15]

The Bombay Council based its tactical plans entirely on the survey report of Captain Steuart. It despatched from Bombay an advance party under Steuart, consisting of six companies of grenadiers from different corps on the 22nd November, 1778. Lieutenant Colonel Egerton, Commander-in-Chief of the army, with his suite, left Bombay on the 24th and Carnac and Mostyn on the 7th December. The whole force was composed of 591 Europeans of the Regiment and artillery, 2278 sepoys and 500 gun luscars. Raghoba accom-panied the force with his small body of horse and infantry.[16]

It would be interesting to analyse the British plan of attack on Pune. They had planned the expedition into different stages. The first stage was to set out from Bombay in boats, then enter the Panvel river and reduce the Belapur fort near Thane which commanded the entrance to the Panvel river and the continent. This was a sound plan. The Maratha navy, being very weak as compared to that of the British, was not in a position to offer any resistance to the latter in the Panvel creek. From the point of view of the defence of Pune, which was the Maratha capital in the 18th century, the Panvel creek and the Belapur fort were the first weak links. As they were important strategic points, commanding the main route to Pune, the Marathas should not only have guarded them heavily, but they should have also repaired the Belapur fort and converted it into a

stronghold. It seems from the British intelligence reports that nothing of the kind had been acted upon by the Marathas. The fort could be easily surprised by an enemy. It was because of this that the British commanders decided to have their first base-camp at Panvel. Panvel had an ample supply of water. The ammunition and other material could be stored there in a depot. The capture of Panvel and Belapur fort would give another advantage to the British. Their line of communication with Bombay would be safe and the enemy would not be able to surprise that island if he so desired in order to reduce the pressure on Pune.

The second stage in the British march was to proceed from Panvel to Khopoli at the foot of the Borghat and create another military base-camp there. As Khopoli commanded the entrance to the Borghat from the Bombay side and is surrounded by hills, it was a secure second base. At Khopoli, there was good supply of water. Khopoli was another weak link in the Maratha defence of Pune. A strong Maratha force stationed there would have been able to block the path of the enemy trying to enter Khopoli, which was the only entrance to the Borghat. According to Steuart's report, the Marathas had not cared even to keep a guard-post there.

The third stage in the advance of the British army was to reach to the top of the Borghat and create an advance base there. During the first Anglo-Maratha War, the summit of the Borghat was at a place, known as the Sow Darwaja[17]

(Hundred Gates?). Near this Darwaja, there was also a pagoda. This Darwaja and pagoda are mentioned in Captain Stueuart's report. It is just possible that this Sow Darwaja was situated somewhere near the site where the temple of Waghjai is standing to-day. This place near Sow Darwaja had many natural advantages. Firstly, its surrounding area was nothing but a large and extensive plateau where an army could easily camp. There were small hillocks and rocks near this place, which could be used as a cover by the soldiers for their defence. The most important factor which made the summit of the Borghat useful from the military point of view was that it could command and guard the roads leading to and from the Konkan, Pune and Bombay.

To reach the summit of the Borghat, it was necessary for the British to dig and cut across the hilly regions a good path-way. Such a path-way would have provided an easy passage for the British infantry, but to carry artillery to the summit was an aweful and arduous task. Heavy guns could not have been carried through except by the help of elephants. The Bombay Council, therefore, rightly decided to send medium-sized and light artillery (viz. 5 and 6 pounders as medium-sized and 2 or 3 pounders as light). The medium-sized artillery would have to be drawn by carriages, while the light artillery could be easily carried on shoulders by the labourers. The British army had made provision for a class of sappers and miners as well as for hiring carriages, bullocks and labourers.

The British plan to halt at the summit of the Borghat and create an advanced base there exposes another weakness of the Maratha line of defence. It is probable that the Pune Government was so overconfident of the natural strength of the Borghat range that it did not take the least pains to add their own defence to it. When Captain Steuart and before him Torriano surveyed the Borghat region, they did not find either a fort or a battery to annoy the enemy troops.[18] Had the Marathas stationed a permanent strong post at the summit of the Borghat, with a park of artillery, they could have utilised to their maximum advantage the heights of the Ghat. In a battle, an army camping at a high altitude always has an edge over its adversary camping or marching at low height. Khopoli is at sea level. The Maratha guns and cannon would have been more effective at the height of Khandala, testing the strength of the British infantry to the full. Besides, the Maratha ganims could have given more harassment to the British in the hilly and rugged region of the Borghat than on a plain. The importance of hilly regions, which had been fully recognised by Shivaji, seems to have escaped the attention of his successors.

The fourth stage in the British march was to descend the Ghat on the Pune side after some of the Peshwa's sardars defected to Raghoba's side as per the Bombay Government's expectations. With all their powerful artillery and disciplined infantry, the British army had one major weakness. They had no powerful cavalry to take advantage of the

execution and penetration effected by their fire. On the contrary, the Marathas, though poor in infantry and artillery departments, had a fairly good cavalry at their command. A good cavalry adds to the mobility of an army. The British commanders of the Pune expedition very well knew that the Maratha horse could not make rapid manoeuvres in the hilly territories of Khandala. But they were equally conscious that once they descended the Ghat and took the route to Pune, the Maratha horsemen would hover round them by keeping themselves beyond the range of the British gun-fire. Therefore, they were banking on the idea that with the defection of the Maratha sardars like Tukoji Holkar and Mahadaji Shinde, the cream of the Maratha cavalry would be addéd to their side and their way towards Pune would be cleared. Here the Bombay civil and military authorities misjudged the entire situation. They relied too much on Thomas Mostyn's reports about Morobadada Phadnis' rupture with Nana Phadnis and the supposed rivalry between Nana and Mahadaji Shinde. The Bombay Council did not care to investigate the truth behind Mostyn's reports. One could hardly deny the fact that there were differences between Nana Phadnis and his opponents like Morobadada Phadnis and his ally Sakharam Bapu Bokil. But Mostyn had not properly understood Nana and Mahadji. It is true that Mostyn was good at reporting the events, but it seems that he lacked the ability of judging men.[19]

The whole success of the British military plan depended

on the rapid and swift movements of the British army. Colonel Egerton and other British commanders had decided to reach the summit of the Borghat and descend it even before the Marathas had any inkling of it. Here again they underestimated Nana's intelligence department. Nana had always strong suspicions about the British designs and he had kept himself well informed of the British movements.

According to the plan, the British army set out from the Kolaba camp in two divisions. On the afternoon of the 22nd November 1778, Captain Steuart's detachment sailed in the evening for Apte.[20] The rest of the army embarked and sailed in the afternoon for Belapur on the 23rd November under Lieutenant Colonel Cay. On the 24th, Cay arrived near the Belapur fort[21] and took its possession. The Maratha garrison of the fort surrendered without resistance. On the same day Colonel Egerton left Bombay and arrived at Belapur in the night.[22] On the 25th, the Bombay army re-embarked and sailed up the Panvel river in the morning and arrived in the afternoon at Panvel[23] where it encamped and provisions were served to the troops. In the meantime, the advance party under Captain Steuart took possession of the Borghat pass.

In the initial stages, the British commanders were taking every care to maintain intact the line of communication and supplies of the advanced guards with the rear through Kolaba-Panvel-Khopoli-Khandala route. On the 13th

December, 1778, the whole army marched and took up its ground about 1/4th of a mile in front of Khopoli,[24] the second base camp. This means, it took nearly three weeks for it to complete its first two stages - one from Kolaba to Panvel and the other from Panvel to Khopoli. The march was slow not due to immobility of the British soldiers, but because of the rugged and hilly region in which they were advancing. Much of their valuable time was spent in the work of sappers and miners of preparing a good road for a trained infantry to march on and the artillery to be dragged forward.[25] However, due to this delay, the British commanders were gradually losing the element of surprise in their attack on Pune.

During the advance march, Egerton, the Commander-in-Chief, had sent out two parties under an escort of a Jamidar and 20 sepoys each in quest of sheep and other necessaries for the army with positive orders not to injure the inhabitants and to make regular payment for everything brought into the camp.[26] This reveals the British policy of winning over the sympathy the local inhabitants, which is supposed to be one of the important principles of war even today. The Maratha generals and soldiers in the later part of the 18th century, however, had forgotten this basic principle of military art. In a number of Marathi papers and documents preserved in the Deccan College and the Pune Archives, Pune, we come across repeated complaints made by the common people

and ryots against the ravages made by the Marathas not only in the enemy territories, but also in their own region.

So far Raghoba had not joined the British army. Carnac and Mostyn, two members of the Pune Committee other than Egerton, landed at Panvel in order to meet Raghoba and hearing that Raghoba had passed that place on his way from Kalyan, determined to proceed with the utmost expedition. On the 9th December 1778, they proceeded to Barwai.[27] Finding that Raghoba was up in the fort of Prabal[28] for the last three days, they sent him a message acquainting him of their arrival near Barwai. Raghoba sent word in return that he would come down the next day morning, that his adopted son, Amritrao, with all his baggage, guns, etc. had been ordered to march from Panvel to Barwai and that when Amritrao arrived at Barwai, he would accompany them (Mostyn and Carnac) to the army.[29] Chinto Vithal Rairikar, a Brahmin sardar, who had taken Raghoba's side against the Barbhais, waited on Carnac and Mostyn. He acquainted them in the name of Raghoba that he (Raghoba) requested that they should go to Barwai that day; that next day he would certainly come down and settle with them about proceeding to the army. Carnac and Mostyn sent a message to Raghoba that he should proceed promptly because every minute was precious in the execution of their plan to carry him to Pune. On the 10th Amritrao came from Panvel to visit Carnac and Mostyn and on the next day Raghoba joined them. Carnac and Mostyn joined the main army at Khopoli under Egerton,

while Raghoba remained at Chowk[30] waiting for his cannon and baggage to arrive there.

While these things were happening, a circular letter by the Bombay Council on behalf of Raghoba was sent to different Maratha sardars and jahgirdars. This circular letter declared to all ~~the~~ and sundry that the Bombay Government had been moved to the resolution on Raghoba's behalf by the unjust conduct of the present administration at Pune, which had violated almost every article of the treaty concluded with the East India Company in March 1776, and by their great desire to restore through Raghoba's hand peace and good order to the Maratha empire, which had been so long involved in troubles and confusion and experienced so many calamities by mismanagement and discord.[31] In spite of repeated assurances of Raghoba and Chinto Vithal that a good many Maratha sardars would join the former's cause, none responded to this call.

Here it would be interesting to note the working of the Maratha Council. At Pune some of the Maratha sardars having sympathy for Morobadada Phadnis, Nana's cousin brother, and Sakharam Bapu Bokil were against Nana, as these sardars had a soft corner for Raghoba. Tukoji Holkar was ill disposed towards Nana because the latter had his diwan Naro Ganesh imprisoned. Mahadaji Shinde had never been reconciled to Nana, because, there was a sort of competition between the two as to who should dominate the Maratha politics. He did not like respectful treatment given by Nana to

St. Lubin. He was more favourably disposed towards the British than towards the French. Parashuram Bhau Patwardhan was on good terms with Nana. But Raghoba and the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur were trying to poison his ears against Nana for quite some time.[32] This situation at the Court of Pune, made Raghoba and Mostyn hope that Nana would be deserted by other prominent Maratha sardars.

But their hopes were belied due to three factors. Firstly, Nana adopted conciliatory approach towards his sardars. His intelligence department was efficient. As soon as he received news at the end of November 1778 that Raghoba had some evil designs on Pune,[33] he immediately started organizing opposition against him. He won over Mahadaji Shinde to his side by sweet words and strengthened his alliance with him. He pleased Tukoji Holkar by releasing his diwan Naro Ganesh from prison. The Karbharis and other sardars then assembled together to discuss the question of commencing hostilities against Raghoba. They unanimously declared that they would not have taken up arms against Raghoba, had he not made an alliance with the British. They would prefer death to the rule of a foreigner.[34] The second factor for the lack of response from the Peshwa's sardars to Raghoba's call was the late arrival of Goddard's army to the Deccan from the north. If Colonel Leslie had not wasted precious time in petty Bundelkhand affairs in the wake of a relatively important issue, the Calcutta army would have reached Bombay in time. In that case, the

British show of military strength might have perhaps resulted in defections in the ranks and files of the Marathas. Thirdly, the position of Raghoba was legally and morally weak. The British had illegally occupied the Sashti island of the Marathas. It was not their business to determine who was the true Peshwa. Raghoba had been deposed from the Peshwaship by the Barbhais in a constitutional way. He was first impeached by Ramashastri, the Chief Judge of the Maratha State, who had declared Raghoba to be guilty in connection with the murder of Narayanrao Peshwa. The Karbharis had also taken care to receive sanction from the Chhatrapati of Satara to the deposition of Raghoba and to the Peshwaship of Madhavrao Narayan. If at all the British wanted to act in a constitutional way, they should have brought the legal sanction of the Chhatrapati of Satara to the regency of Raghoba and then attempted to instal him on the Peshwaship on behalf of the Chhatrapati. Lastly, Nana imprisoned Moroba Phadnis (Nana's cousin brother) and his partisans, who had secret correspondence with the British at Bombay regarding the installation of Raghoba on the Peshwaship.[34-a]

After assembling all his sardars, Nana Phadnis took the stock of the situation. The exact figure of the Maratha forces cannot be ascertained due to lack of reliable sources. But an approximate figure can be given. The British estimated the strength of the Maratha army at 40,000 cavalry and 16,000 infantry.[35] The Maratha sources[36] give the

analysis of the Maratha forces as - Tukoji Holkar's 6,000;[37] Mahadaji Shinde's 15,000; Huzrat or the Peshwa's army 10,000; Bhivrao Panse's[38] artillery and 5,000 soldiers, Balaji Vishwanath Phatak's[39] 4,000. The total comes to about 40,000 troops, cavalry and infantry taken together. They do not include the non-combatants. As Balaji Vishvanath Phatak was stationed in the Konkan to guard the passes there, the total Maratha army on the battlefield of Talegaon seems to be 35,000. Parashuram Bhau's units were engaged at Surapur to fight with the local rebels there, while major part of Haripant Phadke's troops were stationed in Gujrat and Khandesh to keep watch on the movements of Colonel Goddard. Haripant himself was present on the battlefield of Talegao with a few thousand horse. The major part of the armies under Shinde and Holkar was in the north. The Huzrat or the Peshwa's army was a standing army. The remaining part of the Maratha army was a feudal one.

The British were relying mainly on their disciplined infantry and artillery. From the point of view of the Marathas, their only effective weapon was the mobile cavalry. However, the main defect of the Maratha army was the lack of powerful artillery. The light and medium-sized cannon of ~~Baji~~ Bhivrao Panse's artillery were no match for their British counterpart, so far as the accuracy, penetration and range of fire power were concerned. Besides, they had no trained and

disciplined infantry. Naturally, all their manoeuvres and tactics would be in tune with the movement of their cavalry.

The material available in the English records reveals the plans and tactics of the British commanders and soldiers; but unfortunately we do not have such documentary evidence to show how the Maratha statesmen and commanders were discussing their plans and strategy before starting the battles. However, from the movements of the Maratha armies which could be traced with the help of the limited Maratha records, we may hazard to give a general outline of their military strategy.

Nana and Mahadaji must have taken into consideration the fact that the Maratha cavalry would be totally ineffective in the hilly region of the Borghat and its surrounding areas. They, therefore, decided to adopt the following tactics in order to repulse the onslaught of the British:
(1) Bhivrao Panse, the chief of the Peshwa's artillery department, was to proceed with an army of 8,000 infantry as advanced guard to the foot of the Borghat on the Pune side. He was to be assisted by Monsieur Noronha,[40] a Portuguese gunner of calibre. With the help of his artillery Bhivrao was to halt or at least check the advancing columns of the British under the command of Captain Steuart.
(2) Bajipant Anna Joshi[41] and Ramchandra Ganesh Kanade[42] a veteran Brahmin commander, were to station their cavalry units at a short distance from Bhivrao Panse's artillerymen. They were to take advantage of execution made by

Pânse's artillery and harass the advancing column of the British. (3) The main body of the Maratha army under Mahadaji Shinde, Tukoji Holkar and Haripant Phadke was to encamp at Talegao, where water-supply was ample. From Talegao, the army could easily keep its line of communication with the advanced guard of Pânse in the front on the one hand and maintain intact its line of supplies with Pune on the other. (4) If required, Nana Phadnis himself and the Pratinidhi were to proceed to the front and middle lines of the Maratha army. This was the Maratha plan so far as the positions of the army units were concerned.

From the point of view of tactics, the Maratha commanders decided to allow the British columns to descend the Borghat and come to the plains on the Pune side. After the descent of the enemy troops, the Maratha cavalry units were to be scattered in very small units in different directions, take cover behind bushes, trees, etc. and keep themselves beyond the range of the British artillery and gun fire, encircle the enemy and harass them by their limited fire power. The small Maratha guns and cannon with their limited range of fire power, suited well for such tactics. Mahadaji knew well that the British gunners would never waste their artillery and gun-fire on small units. Another tactical aim of the Marathas was to isolate Raghoba and his army from the main body of the British troops and try to seize his person, because once Raghoba was captured, the sole cause of the war would disappear and the British would

not take further interest in fighting. The third tactical measure was to cut the line of communication and supplies of the enemy by attacking his rear. Balaji Vishwanath Phatak was to proceed from Konkan, attack Kalyan and the surrounding areas and try to cut the logistical support between the Borghat and Panvel, which was the centre of the supply-line of the British army, guarded by Lieutenant Harvey of the Marine Department. Fourthly, the Marathas decided to adopt scorched earth policy and burn the whole region between Pune and Borghat, with a view to preventing the advancing British units from obtaining supplies of fodder and grain. In case of extreme emergency, even Pune itself was to be set on fire. The town of Pune was to be kept ready for evacuation at any moment.

In short, the Marathas adopted a defensive policy in reply to the aggressive or offensive British tactics. The Pune expedition was thus nothing but a clash between mobile cavalry ganims and an efficient infantry supported by artillery.

Nana Phadnis was receiving the news about Raghoba's movements regularly. In the first week of December, 1778, he had sent Bhivrao Yashwant Panse,[43] Ramchandra Ganesh Kanade and Bajipant Anna Joshi to Talegao. By the 15th December, these three Maratha commanders had encamped at Talegao, while Mahadaji Shinde and Tukoji Holkar started their march from Vanavadi,[44] crossed the Mula river and halted near a bridge at Khadki.[45] By then the British

advance guard under Captain Steuart had occupied the summit of the Borghat and the three members of the Pune committee, Mostyn, Carnac and Colonel Egerton, had started their work of directing the expedition from the 16th December.[46]

The Pune Committee, however, did not work harmoniously. When the Bombay Council formed the Committee, it had drawn a distinct line between the respective jurisdictions of the Commander-in-Chief and the other two civil members. All political intercourse with Raghoba and the execution of the general plan of the expedition were entrusted to the civil members while they were prohibited from meddling in the details of army activities and military policies, which belonged to the jurisdiction of the Commander-in-Chief. However, Egerton disliked the power of the two civil members to concert and conduct all political and military operations in the course of the expeditions. Unfortunately, Mostyn, the only person experienced in Maratha politics, fell ill and had to return to Bombay where he died on the 1st January, 1779. In his death the British lost a diplomat who had known the ins and outs of the Maratha politics. He was the brain behind the Pune expedition. The Pune Committee lost his guidance, which led to a split in the remaining members of the Pune Committee - Egerton and Carnac. This resulted in unnecessary wastage of time in discussion over general and military policies as well as technical and legal points. The ultimate result of all this was that the unity of

command which is necessary for a successful military action was lost and ultimately the British had to suffer.[47] It was to the credit of Nana that he did not allow the dissentions among the Marathas to go to the extreme as the British.

While the British troops were advancing, Nana Phadnis sent some of the Peshwa's Gardis and Monsieur Noronha alias Musa Narang to the help of Bhivrao Panse at Talegao.[48] The number of Gardis was 347. Pratinidhi's army was also accompanying the Gardis. Nana Phadnis himself, with Mahadaji Shinde and Tukoji Holkar, marched from Chinchwad[49] to Pavana[50] before 23rd December and reached in the vicinity of Talegao on the 24th.[51]

The first clash of arms between the advanced parties of the two sides occurred on the 22nd December. Bhivrao Panse who had encamped at Talegaon, marched near the foot of the Borghat with his artillery and fired some shots on the advanced posts of Captain Steuart on the Ghat. The British also returned the fire.[52] Panse's attack was directed towards Raghoba's men who were encamping in front of Captain Steuart's advanced posts. Panse repeated his attacks on the 23rd but was beaten off by two companies of Captain Steuart's brigade.[53]

Between the 25th and the 30th December, Panse's infantry launched three attacks on the advanced posts of the British and connonaded them. One of them had been directed towards Colonel Steuart's post and the other two towards Colonel Cay's post from a distance of one mile.[54] The first two

attacks were not severe but third was a severe one in which Lieutenant Colonel Cay received a dangerous wound on his loin from a rocket and died shortly afterwards. Lieutenant Cockburn was ordered in consequence of this incident to take command of the first brigade.

By the end of December, 1778 the Bombay army had not been able to descend the Borghat and make a headway against the Marathas. The chief responsibility for this lay on the shoulders of Colonel Egerton whose method of work was defective. He tried to carry guns and cannon up the Ghats by means of carriages. For this he had to construct a new road, which work took much of his valuable time. If he had paid attention to the advice of Carnac and employed labourers instead, much time and expense would have been saved. Egerton thus completely neglected the principle of Mobility and Surprise, which, according to Napoleon, formed the very soul of war strategy.[55]

Due to the delay by the Bombay army in ascending the Ghats, the Marathas found much time to prepare and organise themselves. They soon began making their appearances near the Borghat and burnt down all the villages between the British camp at Khandala and Pune[56] in order to hinder their march as much as possible. Had the British troops advanced more rapidly, they might probably have reached very near Pune before they met any interruption. The slow march also resulted in the near exhaustion of the quota of grain, fodder and other supplies which was very limited. At the

end of December, it became necessary for them to buy their supplies from the local people. But the Marathas had so thoroughly burnt the whole country round about Pune that the British army was not in a position to procure grains and other necessities.

Egerton's military ideas seemed to be wholly derived from the mode of practice he had observed during the short time he was in Germany.[58] He was proceeding with the same precaution as if he had an European to deal with, whereas the only method of ensuring success in India was to advance and be forward. Due to Egerton's method of march from post to post, the Marathas gained the advantage on their side. The ground being throughout broken into gullies and covered with bushes and underwood, they could find many linking places from which to throw their shots and rockets with impunity. They came to know that the British would not waste their fire shots upon men divided into small parties and beyond a certain distance.[59]

On the 27th December, the third brigade under Captain Steuart descended the Ghat and encamped on the plain below. Upto the 1st January 1779 the other two advance brigades left the Ghat and entered the plain. Bhivrao Panse's men were constantly firing at the advancing brigades. In the minor skirmishes that followed, Monsier Noronha alias Musa Narang distinguished himself by firing several cannon shots on the British posts at the Borghat and the plains below it. In one of his letters he writes, "I had accompanied Bhivrao

in his advanced march. The British first started cannonading. Panase then ordered me to return fire. I fired twenty shots from the cannon, named 'Sabsikan', which fell into the camp of the enemy. Our Pendharis[59] seized and captured one Mussalman and one Dhangar from the enemy side."[60] Noronha is said to have played an important role in the battle of Talegao. But the details of his achievements are not available.

On the 4th January 1779 the British troops encamped at Karla at sunrise in the morning under the cover of a grove from which they dislodged the hovering Maratha bands. The Maratha horsemen quickly retired, but cannonaded the British camp at Karla till past two o'clock. In this action Captain Steuart was struck by a ball from the enemy's gun on the back part of his side near the shoulder, and he died in about two hours.[61] He was such a gallant military officer that his loss was felt not only by the British, but even the Marathas appreciated his valour by giving him the heroic name 'Istur Pakada',[62] a glowing tribute by a chivalrous enemy. After Steuart's death, his place was taken by Lieutenant Colonel Hartley.[63]

Next day the British army marched to Mandhurna[64] plain. Here the Marathas cannonaded the British troops, but the latter drove the former upwards of two miles and took up their ground upon an eminence. The Marathas retreated about two miles. This day (6th January) Colonel Egerton gave up the command to Lieutenant Colonel Cockburn

on account of very bad state of his health.[65]

By this time Nana Phadnis had sent reinforcements from the Konkan, which were on their way to Khopoli, to stop the supplies of the British and break their line of communication in the rear with Panvel and Thane.[66] The Marathi records mention that between the 1st and the 6th January 1779, some of the British troops had halted at Govitri,[67] which was rather out of the usual route. Here Bhivrao Panse's artillery gave a good account of itself.[68] The main camp of the Marathas under Mahadaji Shinde, Tukoji Holkar and Nana Phadnis was still at Talegao.

After Lieutenant Colonel Cockburn took the command of the army from Colonel Egerton, he gave orders to his officers to march forward to Talegao wherefrom the main camp of the Marathas was operating. As the British columns advanced, the Marathas started retiring. When the British army came within a mile of Talegao on the 9th January, the Marathas started cannonading their line from some of the guns which they had placed on the left on a hill and also beyond a gulley. Although they kept a brisk fire, there was no loss on the English side. The British also exchanged fire and drove the Marathas to the other side of the village. While entering Talegao, Captain Hartley's units formed the front guard of the British army. Then followed in the middle the main body of the British infantry. After the main body, marched at a distance the rear guard under Captain Gordon, accompanied by Raghoba, his guns and bag and baggage.

Observing Raghoba's camp, Bhivrao Panse's party, making a flank movement on the left of the British army came round in its rear as the British advanced, and attacked the rear guard but was beaten off by Raghoba's guns. As the British army entered Talegao on the 9th January, the Marathas retired.[69]

When the British entered Talegao, there was panic among the people at Pune. All the merchants, traders and common people evacuated that town. Nana Phadnis was in favour of burning that town also, but Shinde and Holkar were reluctant to take this extreme measure.[70] They decided to take the next step by watching the movements of the British troops.

In the morning of 11th January, Cockburn, the acting Commander-in-Chief was informed that the commissary could get no grain, that it was decided by the Pune Committee (Carnac and Egerton) that the army should fall back so as to open communication with Bombay for supplies and that Raghoba had not a friend to join him. This concerned and surprised Cockburn. He soon summoned Captain Hartley and it was represented to Mr. Carnac how dangerous it would be to attempt to retreat with troops who had never been accustomed to it. Holmes and Hartley proposed to treat with the Marathas at the place where the British troops had halted, as better terms might be expected when the enemy knew nothing of the British intention. But that proposal was rejected by Mr. Carnac, who asked for Cockburn's opinion.

Cockburn replied that he would no doubt carry the army to Pune, if ordered. But as the great train of baggage consisting of 12,000 pack bullock, 300 carts, a large bazaar, artillery park and 1000 coollies with gentlemen's baggage, palanquins, etc. was to be protected by a small army in an open country, he did suppose that that would be difficult as the movements of the horse, and particularly of the Marathas, were extremely rapid. It is necessary to observe here that thirty to forty thousand Maratha army was hovering round the British, whose army did not amount to more than two thousand and eight hundred rank and file. About 4 o'clock on the 11th January 1779, Cockburn received from Mr. Carnac orders to retreat in the presence of Lieutenant Richardson. Cockburn desired a written order, which, Carnac said, would be sent to him. But it never was. Cockburn then proposed that the tents should be struck at 10 o'clock at night and the army to march at 11 to which Carnac had no objections. By this Cockburn was in the hope of gaining a night's march. Due to this policy, baggage would have been more secure and the main body of the small Bombay army could have better acted against any force that might have come to oppose them. Absolute necessity obliged Cockburn about 10 o'clock to inform Raghoba of the intended retreat. But the result was that the British intention was soon conveyed to the enemy. To Cockburn's disappointment, the British advanced guard, which formerly formed the rear under the command of Captain Gordon, was attacked

early in the morning of the 12th. On hearing the fire, Cockburn ordered Major Frederick with two European companies to support him. Soon after, the rear, which was formerly the front under the command of Captain Hartley, was attacked, but it did not prevent the British march till about day-light. By that time the British army officers discovered that the enemy had quite surrounded them and that they had to form a line of defence immediately.

Cockburn in consultation with Captain Hartley and Major Frederick formed the line of retreat. Captain Gordon, with Raghoba, led the line of retreat. Then followed the main body of infantry. Captain Hartley, with the select body of grenadiers, brought up the rear. He was to be assisted by Major Frederick.[71] Thus the British line of retreat was exactly the reverse of its line of forward march to Talegaon.

In the present situation, Frederick remained under a severe cannonade, having the whole flower of the Maratha horse ready to charge, whenever an opportunity offered. But the well served artillery and the steadiness of the infantry prevented the onslaught of the enemy. About 12 or 1 o'clock it was judged necessary to order Major Frederick with all his division to retreat, which was conducted with great skill and less loss than could have been supposed. After the units of Hartley and Frederick joined the main body of infantry at the centre, the whole force was ordered to retreat to the village of Vadgao, where the advance guard

under Captain Gordon with Raghoba's troops and the greatest part of baggage had halted.[72]

While retreating to Vadgao, the main body of the British army was attacked on the 12th at 4 o'clock in the rear and both flanks by the Maratha cavalry. As the British sepoys and Europeans were frequently obliged to halt and fire some guns at the enemy, their march was thwarted. This gave the Marathas time to bring up their cannon. It was shortly after day-light that the Maratha attack became general, but the pressure fell principally on Hartley's division, which Cockburn supported with Europeans and sepoys at different times. From the situation of the ground, Cockburn found it impracticable to join the whole line to Hartley's division, as there were large bodies of Maratha horse ready to charge when they found the British troops in such a situation that they could not use their guns. The attack continued upto 4 o'clock in the noon till the British troops succeeded in retiring to Vadgao. The total loss on the British side during this retreat was 31 killed, 96 wounded, 110 missing, besides some of the killed and wounded officers.[73]

Cockburn received a message from Raghoba that 300 of the sepoys intended to desert that night and Mr. Sibbald sent Lieutenant Murray about 12 o'clock to inform Cockburn to the same effect. Added to this was the alarm amongst the Europeans, which by no means corresponded with their former steadiness. Inspite of all the precautions taken by

Cockburn, one Subhedar, one Jamadar, 3 Havaldars, 6 Naiques and 155 men, Europeans, sepoys and luscars, deserted. Both Europeans and sepoys continued to do so till after Vadgao was passed. This shows how the Maratha cavalry had created panic in the British rank and file. The morale of the British army was at its lowest ebb now.

When the Maratha contingents under Shinde, Holkar and Haripant Phadke were engaged in bringing the British troops to their knees, the other Maratha commanders were not inactive. Balaji Vishwanath Phatak hurriedly marched from the Konkan to Kalyan province and set fire to all territories round about Kalyan. Then he marched to Khopoli, drove the British posts there under the command of Lieutenant Harvey and cut off the supply of line of the Bombay army with Panvel, Sashti and Bombay.[74] Thus the British troops were completely sandwitched on the front, the rear and the two flanks by the Marathas. No alternative was left for them but to sue for peace.

The greatest blunder committed by the British commanding officers was that they failed to follow their own plan, according to which the British army was to descend the Ghat only after some of the Maratha sardars joined them with their cavalry in response to Raghoba's call. When the British officers realised that no one from the Maratha side was coming forward to join their side, they should have encamped at Borghat till the arrival of Goddard's infantry and cavalry. If at all they wanted to march, they should

have retreated back towards Khopoli, the base in their rear. There they could have replenished their army with ample supplies till the arrival of the Calcutta army. The second blunder committed by the British commanders was that while in marching towards the open plain of Talegao, they did not take care to keep sizable number of troops at Khopoli, which was the centre of their line of supply in the rear via Panvel and an entrance to the Borghat. As Khopoli was exposed to the Maratha rear attacks, the British lost their strategic position. Thus, while marching in the open plains of Talegao and Vadgao, the British army exposed itself to the frontal, flank and rear attacks from the hovering Maratha ganims, which sealed their fate completely.

When the Pune Committee found that the British troops could neither march forward nor fall backward, it directed Mr. Farmer to the Maratha camp on the 14th January 1779 to propose an accommodation.[75] Farmer explained to the Maratha statesmen that the English were merchants and did not desire bloodshed. He apologised for waging the war against the Marathas by breaking the Treaty of Purandar. Nana Phadnis insisted that the British should deliver Raghoba to the Marathas and agree to remain as they were by their treaty with the late Nanasaheb Peshwa. Mahadaji Shinde first supported Nana.[76] Farmer informed the Maratha Darbar that having no power to negotiate without the sanction of the Calcutta Council, they would be only deceiving the Maratha government in pretending to submit to their

demands and that they had only the authority of handing over the person of Raghoba, which would certainly put an end to all the disputes between the English and the Maratha State.[77]

The Committee tried another source to bring about reapproachment with the Marathas. On the 15th January, they sent Thomas Holmes to Mahadaji Shinde with full powers to settle with the Darbar an agreement for the return of the army to Bombay.[78] Holmes returned from the Maratha camp the same night having settled matters with Mahadaji Shinde and the rest of the Darbar on the only terms they would hear of, which in short were, the surrender of all the possessions acquired since the reign of Madhavrao Peshwa I and the retrogression of the Bengal army. The Committee, however, remarked in their diary that Mahadaji and the whole Darbar could not plead ignorance of their want of power to conclude such a treaty.[79]

On the 16th the treaty was concluded between the Company and the Marathas. According to the terms of this treaty, all the Company's acquisitions in Western India, made since the treaty with the late Peshwa, Madhavrao, were to be given up. The Bengal detachment under Colonel Goddard was to be ordered back. No protection was to be afforded to Raghoba or to any enemy of the Pune Darbar. The British troops were permitted to proceed to Bombay under a Maratha escort. As the mediation of Mahadaji Shinde brought about the peace, a separate agreement was made with him by which Bhadoch was conferred on him by the English in gratitude.[80]

Nana Phadnis was insisting that the whole British army stationed at Vadgao be kept as hostage till the British fulfilled the conditions of the treaty. But due to Mahadaji's soft corner and admiration for the British, that condition was waived.[81] Farmer and Steuart (nephew of Captain Steuart) were left as hostages with Mahadaji Shinde for due observance of the agreement.

The catastrophe at Vadgao was a serious blow to the prestige of British arms in India. The probe or the post-mortem conducted by the Bombay Government into the causes of this debacle, ~~makes~~ made three or four things clear. Firstly, during the Pune expedition, the Bombay Council could not strike a balance between the civil and military authorities. Generally, policies related to political and diplomatic affairs are decided by the civil authorities. They have the right to decide whether a war should be resorted to or not. But once a decision is taken to start a war by them, the details of the military policy and its execution must be left to the military commanders. This balance was not kept by the Bombay Council by appointing the Pune Committee, in which the commander of the army became a mere adjutant of the troops.

Secondly, we find that all was not well with the British civil and army administration. Like the Maratha civil and army officers, the British civil and army officers had quarrels amongst themselves. A number of documents from the (Bombay Secretariat Records Office) Maharashtra State Archives are replete with the

examples of such quarrels. The only difference between the quarrels amongst the Maratha officers and that of the British ones was that the latter erupted from controversies over technical, legal and constitutional points, while the former used to be generally in the nature of personal feuds. Another difference was that the East India Company's administrative and military machinery was such that the mischievous elements could be thrown out of it by such methods like court martial and trials. No such methods were known to the Marathas, with the result that a single mischievous person could harm the whole State. Raghoba is a striking example in this respect.

Thirdly, the British had found out a way of rectifying their past mistakes. Even persons like Colonel Egerton, Cockburn and Carnac were sacked when they were found guilty in bringing about the debacle at Vadgao. This quality of the British was worth imitating by the Marathas and other Indian powers.

For the Marathas the battle of Talegao and the treaty of Vadgao was a partial success. No doubt that they completely humbled the British arms at Talegao by their traditional ganimī kāvā and exposed the so-called invincibility of the British arms, no doubt they defeated the British designs of putting Raghoba in the regency of the Peshwa, no doubt they dictated such terms as to their liking at Vadgao. But what they gained on the battle-field, they lost on the political front. They ignored the important

fact of not to believe in the word of an enemy who is in plight. They should have kept the whole British army as hostage till the conditions of the treaty were satisfactorily fulfilled by the British. They negotiated with a Committee, which had really no power to conclude a treaty. Even after concluding the treaty, the Marathas should not have allowed the British troops to go back to Bombay, until the Vadgao treaty was sanctioned by the Supreme Council at Calcutta and the Bombay Council. Nana Phadnis was insisting on this point, but he was overruled by Mahadaji Shinde, who was responsible for letting slip the golden opportunity of recovering all the Maratha territories grabbed by the British. After the safe retreat of the British army to Bombay, Goddard, Hornby and Hastings, declared the 'Convention of Vadgao' invalid and started another offensive against the Marathas. As Nana Phadnis lacked military ability, he had to play second fiddle to Mahadaji at Vadgao.

The treaty of Vadgao shows a basic defect in the structure and working of the Maratha political structure and organization. At Vadgao Mahadaji Shinde entered into a separate treaty with the British, who conferred upon him the paragana of Bhadoch. During the reign of Shivaji, Sambhaji and Rajaram, the sovereign authority of the Chhatrapati alone could declare war or conclude peace. In the early Peshwa period, the power of the Chhatrapati receded into background, as the Peshwas assumed authority to make or unmake wars and treaties. But the first four Peshwas

had to take formal sanction of the Chhatrapatis of Satara before they entered into any war or treaty. After the murder of Narayanrao Peshwa, the whole situation changed. Sawai Madhavrao being a minor, the state was run on his behalf by the Pune Karbharis. At Vadgao, the treaty should have been entered into with the British by the Council of Barbhais as a whole, which was to be later on formally sanctioned by the Chhatrapati of Satara. Mahadaji had no legal and constitutional right to make a separate treaty. His separate treaty shows that the power of the Maratha Government was divided at two centres - one at Pune and the other at Gwalher. This was an ominous sign from the point of view of the Marathas.

Nana Phadnis came off in good colours during and before the battle of Talegao. He resisted every British move by a counter-move. The British were expecting some of Nana's sardars deserting him and coming over to their side. But contrary to their expectations, instead of Nana's men deserting him, the British sepoys and Raghoba's soldiers deserted their own side. For this the credit goes to Nana's efficient espionage department, which proved even better than that of the English. It was due to the correct report of Nana's spies in Raghoba's camp that he came to know about the secret plan of the British troops to retreat to Vadgao from Talegao in the darkness of night, which helped the Maratha commanders to plan an encirclement of the retreat-

ing British columns.

With the conclusion of the treaty of Vadgao on the 16th January 1779, the second phase of the first Anglo-Maratha War came to an end.

Notes

1 The Pretender, calling himself Sadashivrao Bhau, Nanasaheb Peshwa's cousin brother. He had been confined since 1765. He suddenly escaped from the fort of Ratnagiri on the 18th February 1776 and raised a revolt against the Pune Government.

2 V.G.Hatalkar: 'French Documents Throwing Fresh Light on the Embassy of M.DE St Lubin to the Maratha Court 1777-78, I.C.H.R., Vol. XXXI (Part II), pp. 45-46. V.G.Hatalkar: Relations between the French and the Marathas, p. 184.

3 V.G.Hatalkar: Relations Between the French and the Marathas, pp. 188-189. I.C.H.R., Vol. XXXI (Part II), pp. 45-46.

4 A Deshastha Brahmin. He and his brother Moro Vithal hailed from the village Rairi in the Mutha river valley. Both sided with Raghoba in the Raghoba-Peshwa Madhavrao I conflict. Chinto Vithal worked as a private secretary of Raghoba. Peshwa Madhavrao I put him behind the bars. But after that Peshwa's death, Chinto Vithal was released and he rose to prominence during Raghoba's Peshwaship. He was not on good terms with the Ministerial Party at Pune. On the 19th April, 1780, he was captured by Mahadaji Shinde in Gujrat and was kept in prison at Ujjain. Till his death he was in the prison of Mahadaji.

4a The Purandare family, which hailed from Saswad, a village about 20 miles to the south of Pune, had very friendly and intimate relations with the Bhat family of the Peshwas ever since the period of Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath. Some persons from the Purandare family were Diwans and Mutaliks of the Peshwas. Mahipant alias Bajaba Purandare was the son of Trimbak Nana Purandare.

5 Bom. Sec. Cons. 17th Dec. 1777 (Anglo-Maratha Relations, p. 91). Sixth Report from the Committee of Secrecy, App. No. 26.

6 S.P.D.D., No. 19, pp. 17-18.

7,8 Forrest, Foreign Department, pp. 577-79.

8-a Thomas Goddard: Grandson of Thomas Goddard, Canon of Windsor: at Madras with his regiment (1759-1761): Present at the capture of Pondicherry (Jan. 16, 1761): In the 84th regiment in the Bengal campaign (1763): Joined the Bengal Army: raised "Goddard's Battalion" of sepoys at Murshidabad (1764): Served in quelling the mutiny at Patna (1766) and against the Marathas in Rohilkhand (1772): In command of Berhampur (1774) and of the contingent at Lucknow (1776): Brigadier General (1780): Died on the 7th July, 1783 [D.I.B., pp. 167-68, D.N.B., pp. 26-27].

9 B.M.Add. Mss. 29, 141 (Anglo-Maratha Relations, p. 118).

10 C.P.C., Vol. V, L. No. 1208.

11 C.P.C., Vol. V, L. No. 1329.

12 Forrest, M.S., pp. 328-29.

13 S.P.D.D. No. 19-A, pp. 202-208; Forrest, M.S., p. 331.

14 Sixth Report from the Committee of Secrecy, App. Nos. 116, 117.

15 S.P.D.D. No. 19-A, pp. 422-433.

16 S.P.D.D., No. 19-A, pp. 406-14.

17 The first reference to this Darwaja appears in Captain Steuart's Report. However, no information is available regarding it in Steuart's Report or anywhere else.

18 S.P.D.D. Diary No. 19-A, pp. 137-141.

19 Charles Malet, who became the British Resident at the Pune Court after Mostyn, was more shrewd and efficient than Mostyn.

20 A village about ten miles to the south of Panvel, District Kolaba.

21 About six miles to the west of Panvel and eighteen miles to the south of Thane, district Thane.

22 A copy of Col. Egerton's Journal, S.P.D.D., No. 20, p. 295.

23 The town and port of Panvel is about 28 miles to the N.E. of Bombay at the mouth of the Panvel Creek, Tal. Panvel, District Kolaba.

24 Khopoli is a village about 65 miles to the S.E. of Bombay at the foot of the Borghat on the Bombay side.

25 The road prepared by the British army was the first

good road joining Khopoli and Khandala. Before this Pune expedition, there was only a caravan route between Khopoli and Khandala.

26 S.P.D.D. No. 20, p. 296.

27 A village eight miles to the S.E. of Panvel, district Kolaba.

28 A hill-fort about six miles to the S.E. of Panvel, Tal. Panvel, Dist. Kolaba.

29 Forrest - M.S., p. 338, Diary of the Pune Committee.

30 A village about ten miles to the S.W. of Panvel, district Kolaba.

31 Forrest - M.S., pp. 349-50.

32 A.L., Vol. 7, L. No. 2455.

33 Ibid., L. No. 2456.

34 C.P.C., Vol. 5, No. 1376.

34-a A.L. Vol. 7, pp. 3327-3329; Panse Gharanyacha Itihas, p. 73.

35 Foreign Department, Secret Consultation, 25th February, 1779, No. 3. (Anglo-Maratha Relations, p. 124).

36 A.L., Vol. 7, L. Nos. 2453, 2457, 2460.

37 Tukoji belonged to the fifth generation in Mahadaji Holkar's line. While he looked after the Military matters, Ahalyabai Holkar took care of the administration and financial affairs of the Indore State.

38 Bhivrao Yashwant Panse was the commandant of the Peshwa's Artillery Department during 1774-1779.

39. Balaji Vishwanath Phatak was a civil officer of Nana

Phadnis. He worked in the Phadnisi office of Nana (A.L., Vol. 7, p. 3615). Neither his designation nor the other details of his life are known. He played an important role in the first Anglo-Maratha war.

40 He was a Portuguese artillery gunner, known to the Marathas as 'Musa Narang'. The date of his entry into the Peshwa's service is not known. But during the war under study, he was serving in the Peshwa's artillery department.

41 Baji Gangadhar Joshi was one of the Brahmin commanders of the Peshwas. The details of his life are not available.

42 Ramchandra Ganesh Kanade had distinguished himself in the affairs of north India as well as in the expedition against Janoji Bhonsale of Nagpur during Peshwa Madhavrao I's period. As a sort of competition developed between Ramchandra Ganesh and Visaji Krishna Biniwale, another veteran Brahmin commander of Peshwa Madhavrao I, the Peshwa recalled Ramchandra Ganesh from north India. Ramachandra Ganesh was a seasoned commander of the Marathas during the first Anglo-Maratha War.

43 Bhivrao Yashwant Panse was the eldest son of Yashwantrao Panse, who was the commandant of Peshwa Bajirao I's artillery department. Bhivrao came to prominence because of his achievements in the battle of Rakshasa-bhuvan and against Haidar Ali and the Pretender of Sadashivrao Bhau. He was the chief of the Maratha

Artillery Department from 1774 to 1779.

44 About two miles to the S.E. of Pune city proper.

45 A.L., Vol. 7, L. Nos. 2451, 2452, 2453. Khadki is about four miles to the N.W. of Pune.

46 Forrest - M.S., pp. 345-46.

47 Forrest - M.S., pp. 346-49.

48 S.P.D., Vol. 36, L. Nos. 347, 348, 351.

49,50 About ten miles to the N.W. of Pune. The river Pavana flows in the vicinity of Chinchwad and Talegao.

51 S.P.D., Vol. 36, L. Nos. 351, 352.

52 A.L. Vol. 7, L. No.2454; S.P.D., Vol. 36, L.No. 351.

53 A.L. Vol. 7, L. No. 3455; S.P.D.D. No. 20, pp.298-99.

54 A.L. Vol. 7, L. No. 3457; S.P.D.D. No. 20, p. 299.

55 Phillips T.R.: Roots of Strategy, pp ~~410-9, 10~~. 409-410

56 S.P.D.D., No. 20, p. 95.

57 S.P.D.D. No. 20, p. 99.

58 S.P.D.D. No. 20, pp. 99-100.

59 This is the earliest reference to the Pendharis, employed by the Marathas in their army. This shows that the Marathas started employing the services of the Pendharis at least as early as the first Anglo-Maratha War, if not earlier. The current belief that the Marathas first employed the services of the Pendharis round about 1800 is thus not correct.

60 Aitihasik Tipne, 1.51.

61 S.P.D.D. No. 20, p. 300.

62 Itihas Sangraha, June 1909, issue No. 11, Aitihasik Tipne, p. 78.

63 James Hartley: Entered the E.I.Co's military service at Bombay in 1764: present in the expedition against the pirates on the Malabar coast (1765): A.D.C. to the Governor of Bombay (1770): Q.M.G. of the Bombay Army (1786): In December 1790, defeated Tipu's general, Husain Ali, at Calicut: captured the French settlement of Mahe (1793): Major General (1796): Second in command of the Bombay Army under General Stuart against Tipu (1799): Present at the time of storming of Shriranga-pattan (May 4, 1799): Died at Cannanore (Oct. 4, 1799) [D.I.B., p. 192; D.N.B., pp. 71-77].

64 The village named Mandharane, situated between Karla and Vadgao.

65 S.P.D.D. No. 20, p. 300.

66 S.P.D. Vol. 36, L. No. 362.

67 This village is about seven miles to the north of Vadgao, in district Pune.

68 Ibid., L. No. 364.

69 Forrest - M.S., p. 381; S.P.D.D. No. 20, p. 222.

70 A.L., Vol. 7, L. Nos. 2460, 2461.

71 S.P.D.D. No. 20, p. 222.

72 Ibid.

73 Forrest - M.S., pp. 381-82; A.L. Vol. 7, L.No. 2459.

74 A.L., Vol. 7, L.No. 2460.

75 Forrest - M.S., p. 368.

76 Ibid., p. 369.

77 Ibid., p. 371.

78 Ibid.

79 Ibid., p. 372.

80 Ibid., p. 374.

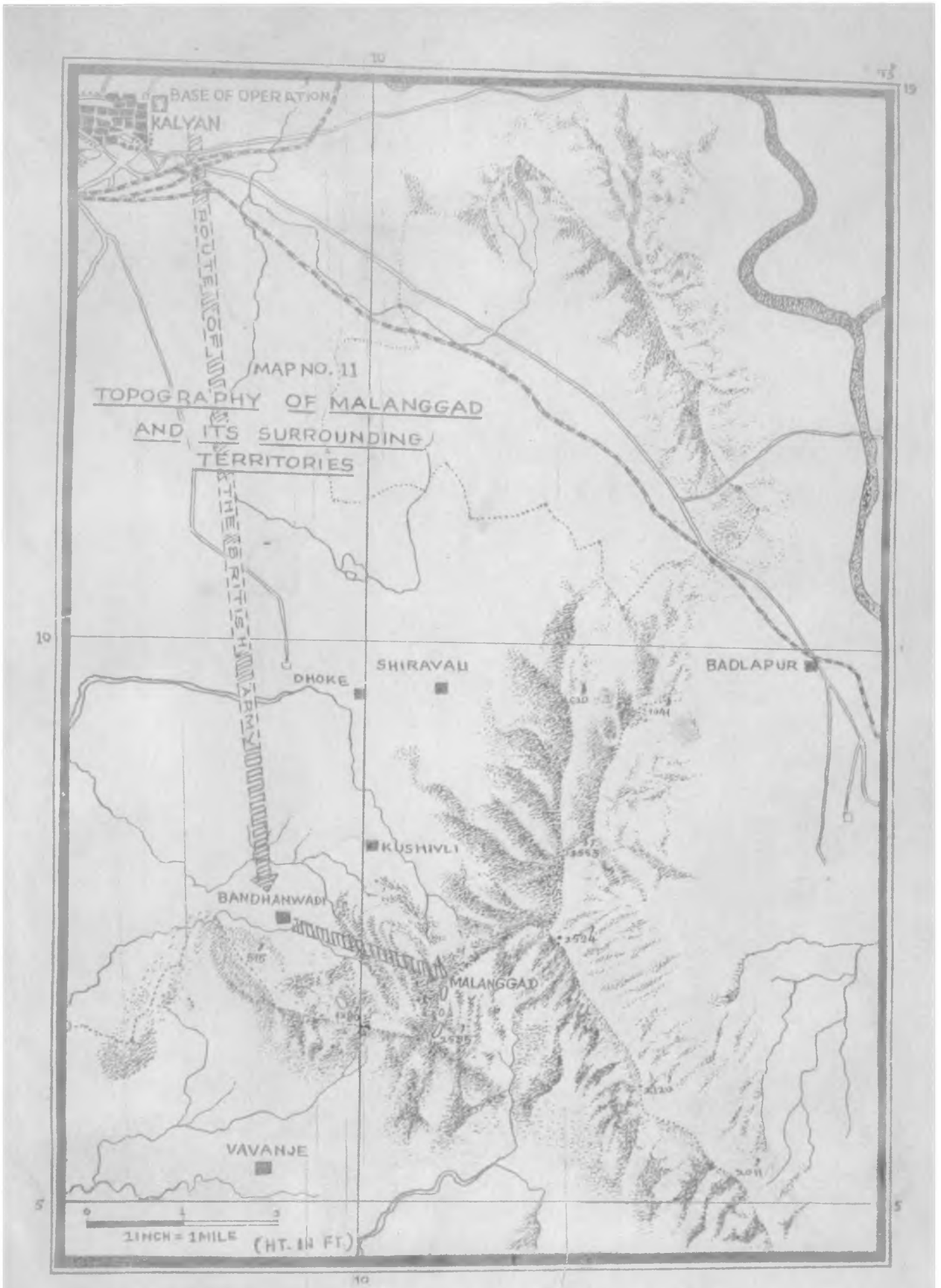
81 S.P.D.D. No. 20, p. 214.

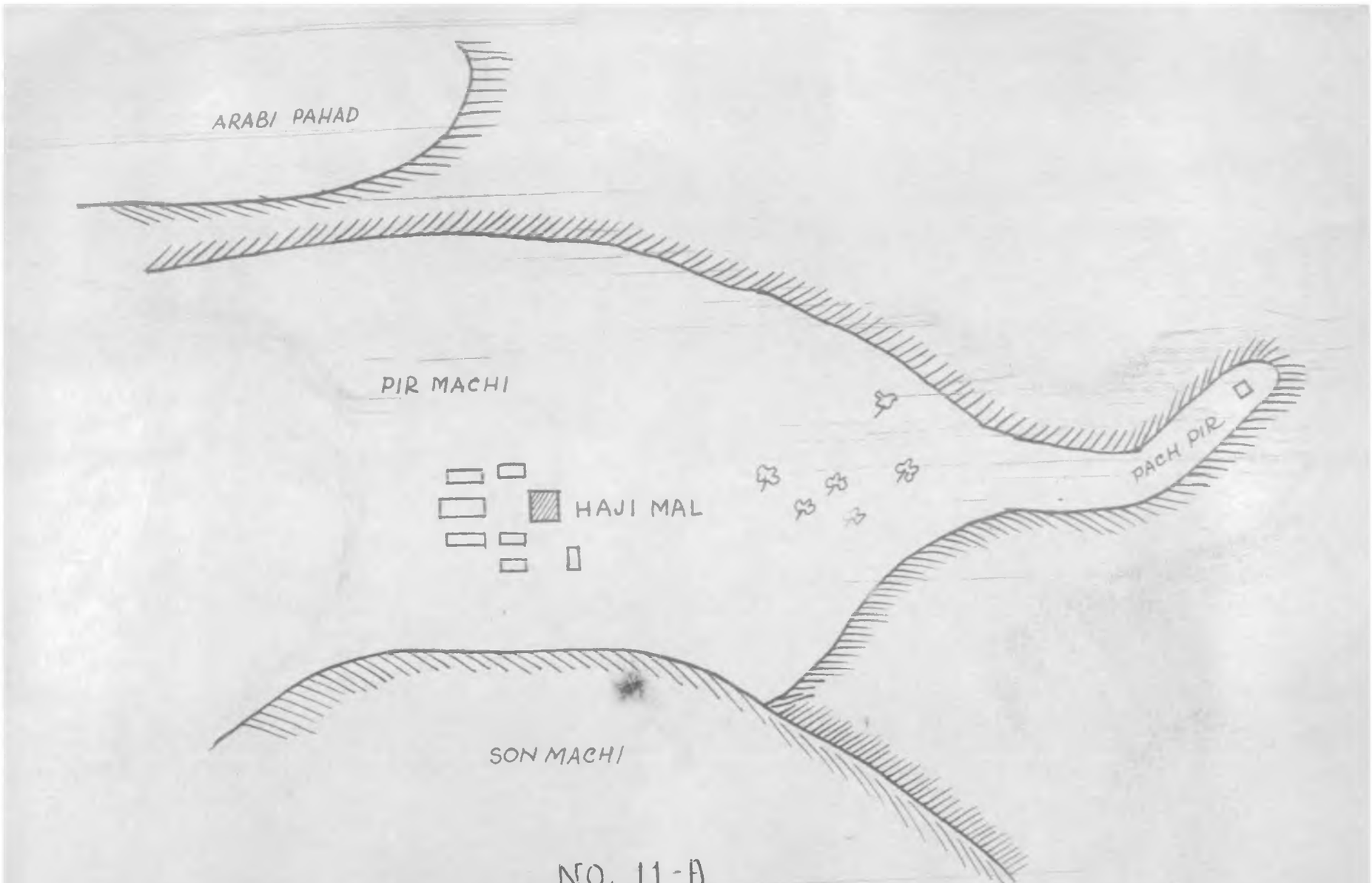
THE FIRST ANGLO-MARATHA WAR

THIRD PHASE (1779-1783)

Chapter V - THE SIEGE OF MALANGGAD (1780)

For geographical references, see Illus. Nos. 11, 11A, 11B, 11C, 12, and 13, attached at the beginning of this chapter, between pp. 154-155. Also see seven photos attached with notes at the end of this chapter between pp. 207C-208.


BASE OF OPERATION
KALYAN
ROUTE OF THE BRITISH ARMY
MAP NO. 11
TOPOGRAPHY OF MALANGGAD AND ITS SURROUNDING TERRITORIES
DHOKE
SHIRAVALI
BADLAPUR
KUSHIVLI
BANDHANWADI
MALANGGAD
VAVANJE
1 INCH = 1 MILE
(HT. IN FT.)

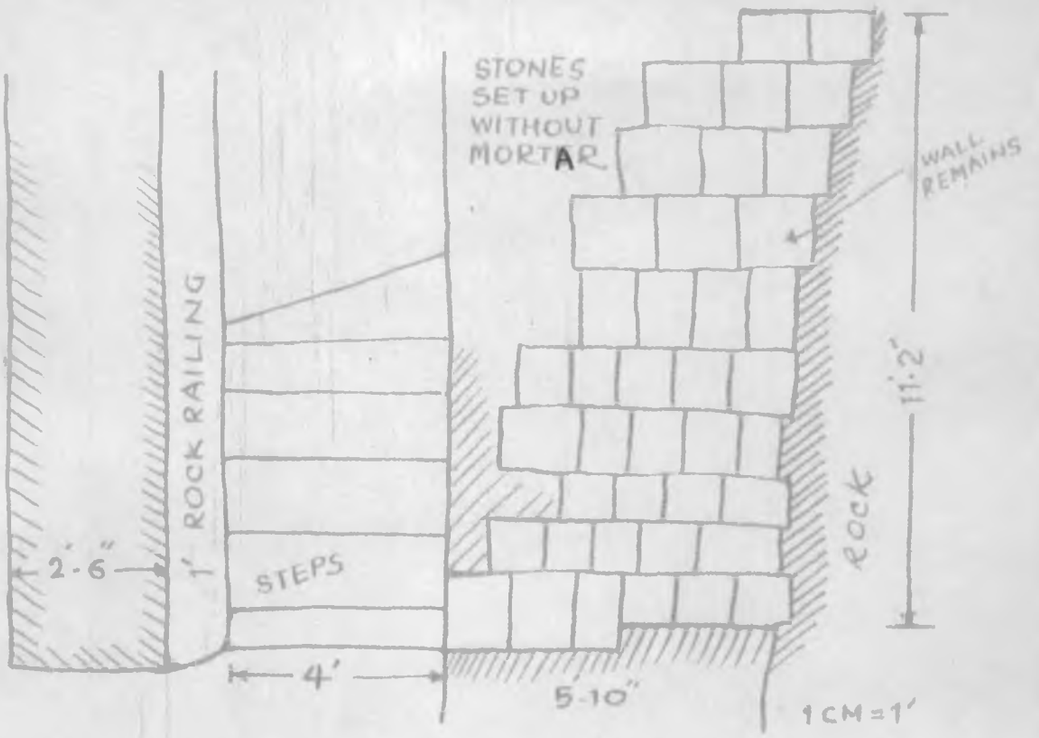


NO. 11-A

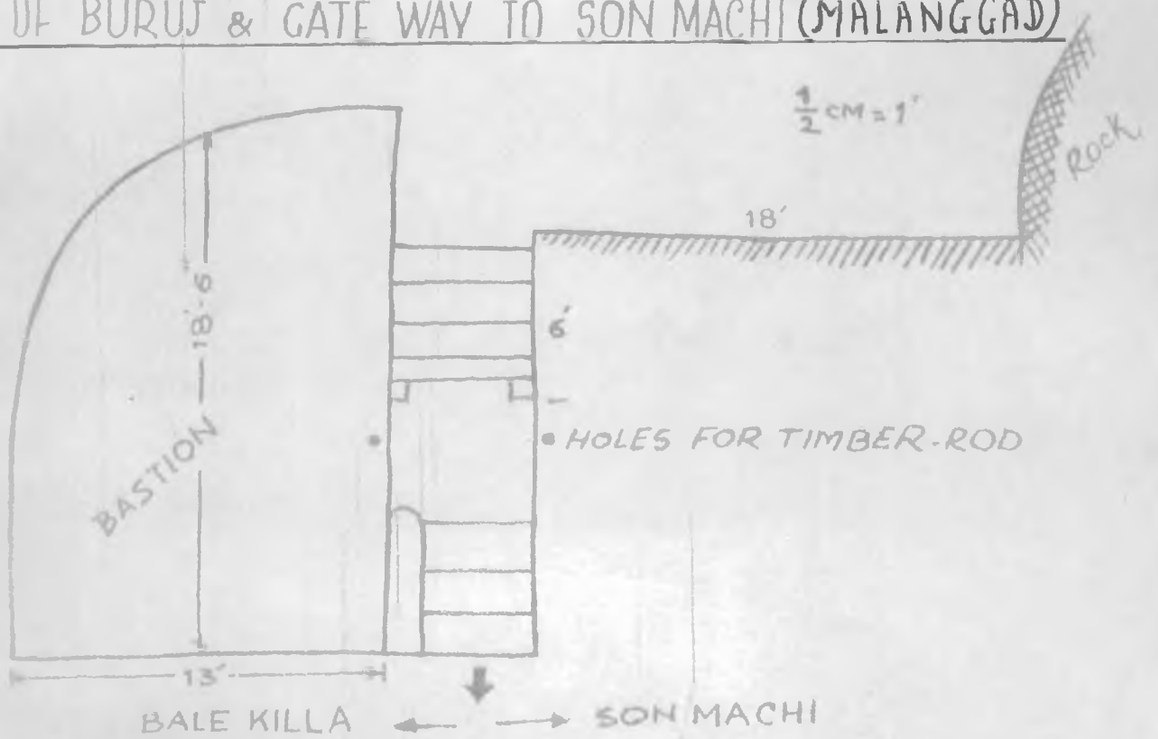
A ROUGH SKETCH OF PIR MACHI (MALANGGAD)

(NO. 11-B)

REMAINS OF RETAINING WALL OF LOWER FORT (MALANG-GAD)



PLAN OF BURUJ & GATE WAY TO SON MACHI (MALANGGAD)



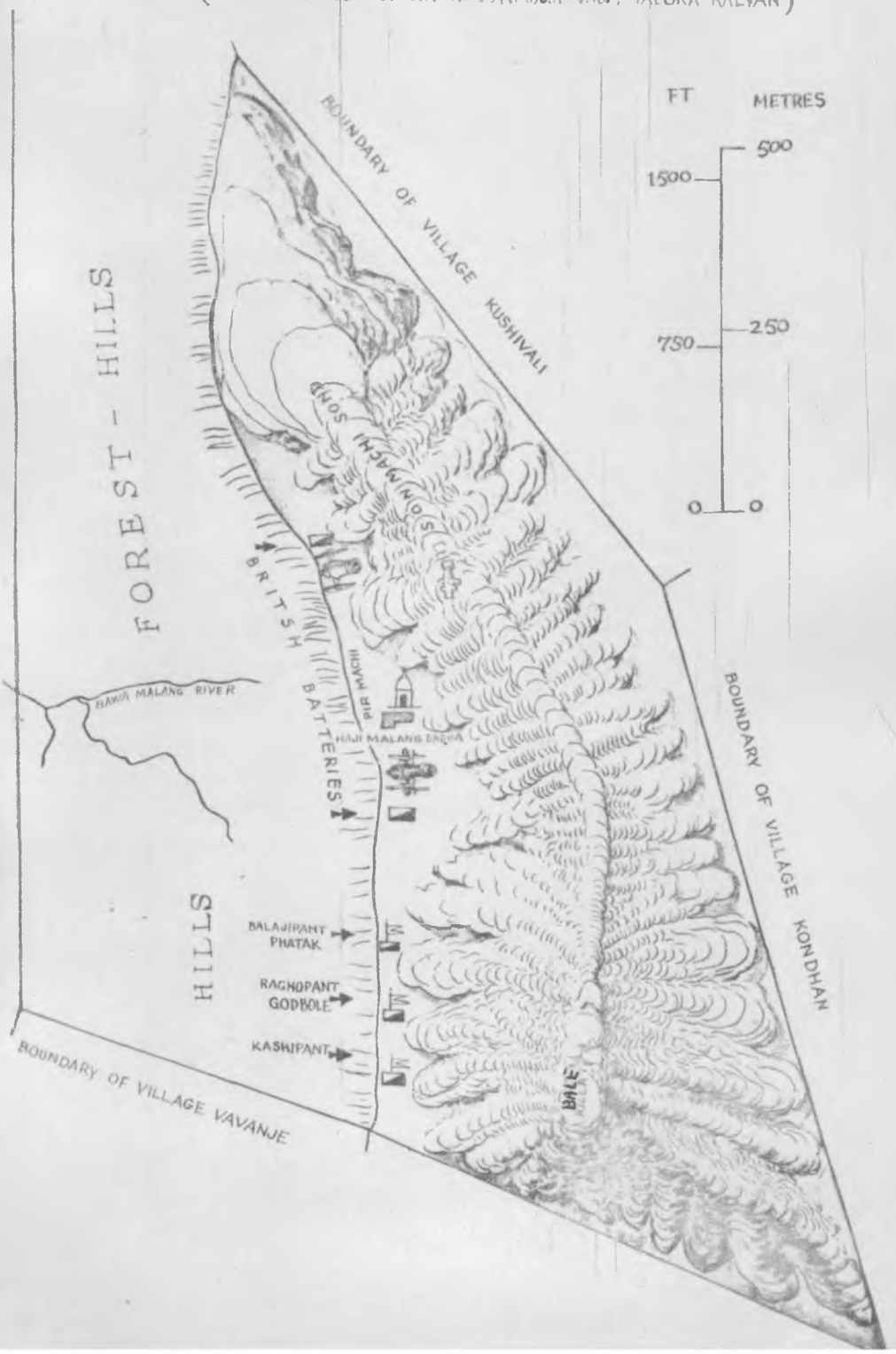
(NO. 11-C)


MAP NO. 12
PLACES RELATED TO
① SIEGE OF MALANGGAD (1780)
② SIEGE OF THE VASAI FORT (1780)
③ SECOND BORGHAT EXPEDITION (1781)
SURAT
DAMAN
THANE DISTRICT
NASIK DISTRICT
AHMEDNAGAR DISTRICT
PUNE DISTRICT
VAJRESHWARI
DIGHASI
MAHULI FORT
DUGAD
ADANE
BHATASAI
BHATANE
PADAGHE
MANDAVI
BHIVANDI
KALU RIVER
GOKHARAVE
SONALE
TITWALA
VASAI
THANE
PERSIK
KALYAN
KAMBE
BAHIRAVGAD
MALSEJ GHAT
MACHINDRAGAD
SHIRAVALI
BADLAPUR
DEVALALI
GORAKSHAGAD
MALANGGAD
DONE
SIDDHAGAD
CHEMBUR
VAVANJE
VANGANI
BELAPUR
TALOJE
PEN
DAMAT
BHIMASHANKAR GHAT
PRABALAGAD
HOG
PANVEL
NERAL
ELEPHANTA
PALASPE
MALDUNGE
MAN
KUSUR GHAT
BARWAI
TOOPGAO
URAN
APTE
CHOWK
KARJAT
RAJMACHI
DAHIVALI
KHARAWAI
KARANJA
KHALAPUR
MODLGAO
MADH
½ INCH = 6 MILES
KHOPOLI
BORGHAT
KHANDALA
LONAWALA
LOHGAD
VISAPUR
TO POONA

MAP NO 13

PLAN OF THE MALANGGAD FORT: RIVAL POSITIONS (1780)

(REPRODUCED FROM SURVEY No 134, MOUJE VADI, TALUKA KALYAN)



CHAPTER V

THE SIEGE OF MALANGGAD (1780)

The Convention of Vadgao marked the end of the second phase of the first Anglo-Maratha War, but it did not end the war itself. The dark clouds of a fresh Anglo-Maratha conflict soon arose on the political horizon of India.

When the Bombay army was suffering humiliating defeat at Vadgao in January 1779, the Calcutta army under the command of Colonel Goddard, despatched by Governor General Warren Hastings, was on its way to Bombay to help it. Goddard crossed Narmada on the 3rd December 1778 and reached Surat via Burhanpur on the 25th February, 1779.[1] To his mortification, he heard the news of the disaster of Vadgao at Surat, before he could join the Bombay army.

The humiliating treaty of Vadgao gave a rude shock to Governor General Warren Hastings. However, he exhibited a statesmanlike grasp of the situation and put forth several proposals before the Supreme Council to retrieve the disgrace heaped on the British arms by the Marathas.[2] One of them was that the English should conclude peace with the Marathas on the basis of the treaty of Purandar of March 1776.[3] His plan was unanimously agreed to and Colonel Goddard was appointed the accredited envoy to treat with the Peshwa's Government. According to this plan, the Marathas were to forego the territories acquired by them through the

Convention of Vadgao and they were never to admit any French forces or allow the French traders to form any establishments in their territories. Hastings considered that if peace could not be obtained on these basic conditions, the English should resort to a vigorous war to efface the loss they had suffered at Vadgao.

Before Goddard started negotiations with the Pune Darbar as instructed by Warren Hastings, Raghoba, who was in the custody of Mahadaji Shinde according to the terms of the treaty of Vadgao, made good his escape near Jhansi and accompanied by Bajirao, his son and Amritrao, his adopted son, reached Surat at the beginning of June, 1779. Raghoba sought the English protection which Goddard promptly granted. This act was a serious breach of the terms of the treaties of Purandar and Vadgao on the part of the British.

Soon Goddard started negotiations with the Pune Darbar. The negotiations went on till the 28th October, 1779. Ultimately Goddard was informed by the Karbharis that they would not make peace with the English unless Sashti was relinquished and the person of Raghunathrao delivered up to the Marathas.[4] Thus the negotiations stood on the verge of a breaking point.

While the fate of the Anglo-Maratha peace talks thus hung in the balance, Goddard received intelligence of a confideracy between the Peshwa, Mudhoji Bhonsale of Nagpur,

the Nizam and Haidar Ali against the British in September, 1779.[5] While the Nizam was its originator, Nana Phadnis was the brain behind it and its organiser. The common feeling of enmity against the British had brought the unity of these four Indian powers, who otherwise used to quarrel with one another. The Nizam had broken himself with the British because they had usurped Guntur from Basalat Jang, one of his vassals. Haidar Ali alienated himself from the British because the latter had captured Mahe from the French who were on friendly terms with him. Mudhoji Bhonsale was indignant at the manner in which the British established their sway over the Bengal province, depriving him of his annual share of Chouth from that province. The Pune Darbar was already displeased with the British because Colonel Goddard refused to hand over Sashti and the person of Raghoba to the Marathas.

The scheme laid down by the members of the quadruple alliance was this: Mudhoji Bhonsale was to invade Bengal and its dependencies, Nizam Ali the Northern Circars, Haidar Ali the Karnatak and Mahadaji - Tukoji were to oppose Goddard in Gujarat.[6] If properly planned and executed, this scheme would have isolated the three British Presidencies at Bombay, Calcutta and Madras and exterpated them from the political map of India. It was a masterstroke of Nana's political strategy.

Sensing the grave threat posed by the confederacy to

the British power in India, Goddard broke the peace parleys with the Pune Government and came to Bombay on the 1st November, 1779. In consultation with the Bombay Council, he planned a counter offensive against the Marathas as a fitting reply to the plan evolved by the four native powers. According to Goddard's plan, the British were to attack the Maratha territories in Gujrat, Malwa and Konkan simultaneously, so that the Maratha forces would be divided on three fronts and prove impotent to get the better of the British arms.

Goddard knew well that Gujrat was torn with a civil war between the two brothers, Fateh Sing and Govindrao Gaikwad. He, therefore, advised the Bombay Government to conclude a treaty with Fateh Sing and win over his allegiance through peaceful overtures. If Fateh Sing refused to reconcile to the British proposal, then force was to be applied. In that case Goddard himself was to lead an expedition to Gujrat, conquer the fertile Maratha territories there within two months and return to Bombay to help the Bombay Government in its conquest of the important port of Vasai and its adjacent territories, whose revenue would make substantial addition to the treasury of the Bombay Government and relieve it of its financial difficulties which were the outcome of a continuous war with the Marathas. Besides, the expenses of the Calcutta army under Goddard could be met without any undue burden on the financial resources of the Bombay Government.

Goddard further suggested that the British rulers in north India should encourage the recalcitrant local chiefs to rebel against Mahadaji Shinde and harass his army stationed in his territories so that he would be compelled to leave Gujrat and go to Malwa. This would further reduce the strength of the Marathas on the Gujrat and Konkan fronts.

The plan envisaged by Nana, Haidar, Mudhoji and the Nizam did not function properly. The last two did not take any initiative in making swift attacks in their respective territories. Haidar Ali, however, kept up his promise and attacked Madras with a view to harassing the British, which was also a little behind the schedule. Nana and Mahadaji too lacked swift movements in attacking the British territories. They were suspicious of each other and wasted much time in correspondence regarding the military tactics to be adopted.

Taking advantage of lethargy on the part of the Maratha officers, Goddard, by swift, rapid marches entered Gujrat and captured the fort of Dabhai on the 20th January 1780[7] and Ahmedabad on the 15th February next.[8] Earlier, he concluded a treaty with Fateh Sing Gaikwad and won him over to the British side.[9] At this stage Mahadaji Shinde and Tukoji Holkar entered Gujrat. The Marathas avoided a direct attack on Goddard's army which was well-equipped with artillery and adopted their traditional guerilla tactics. Goddard, therefore, could not achieve a decisive victory though he gained

some minor triumphs over the Marathas. As the rainy season was approaching near, he returned to Surat on the 8th June, 1780.

When the British and the Marathas were locked in minor engagements on the Gujrat front, the army units of the Calcutta Government captured the strong fort of Gwalher in possession of Mahadaji Shinde on the 4th August, 1780.[10] This was a severe blow to the prestige of the Marathas in general and Mahadaji in particular. Mahadaji, therefore, decided to encamp at Ujjain in June 1780. Thus Goddard's plan succeeded in removing Mahadaji from the Gujrat front.

After the departure of Goddard and Mahadaji to Surat and Ujjain respectively, the focal point of the Anglo-Maratha War shifted from Gujrat and Malwa to the Konkan region. The Bombay Government was growing impatient because Goddard's Gujrat campaign was consuming more time than was expected. It was in a hurry to capture Vasai and its adjacent territories. Goddard was, therefore, asked to withdraw from Gujrat territories and report to the headquarters at Bombay.[11] Goddard, however, postponed the plan of the capture of Vasai fort due to the approaching rainy season.

The Bombay Government had its covetous eye on Vasai and its adjacent territories since long. The Bombay Council, in fact, had planned to capture the Vasai fort along with Sashti in 1774. But then their military might was not equal to this task. So Vasai still remained in the Maratha possession.

As Goddard decided to attack the Vasai fort after the rainy season, the Bombay Government concentrated its attention on the capture of Kalyan and its guarding fort Malanggad. The significance of these two places to the British from the strategic point of view could hardly be exaggerated. It was necessary to capture Kalyan and Malanggad to control the north Konkan and hold Bombay. Presently, the north Konkan comprises the Thane and Kolaba districts. Panvel is directly to the east of Bombay. From Panvel at a little distance to the south east is Khopoli, beyond which is situated Khandala. By capturing the fort of Thane in 1774, the British had brought some pressure on the Vasai fort. But it was still possible for the Pune Government to send armies and supplies to the Vasai fort via Khopoli-Kalyan route.

Kalyan was an important junction, commanding western routes from the Konkan, southern routes from Pune via Borghat and eastern routes via Nane Ghat, Kusur Ghat and Malsej Ghat leading to Bombay. With the capture of Kalyan and Malanggad, the British could effectively guard almost all the land routes through which the Marathas would try to send their army and commissariat to Vasai. Further, Kalyan being a good port, its possession would help the British check the activities of the Maratha navy under the command of the Dhulaps and the Angres effectively. Thus the naval route would also be closed to the Marathas to provide any succour to Vasai.

With all the above considerations, the Bombay Government decided to undertake an operation against Kalyan and Malanggad before the execution of their plan of attack on the fort of Vasai.

Nana Phadnis had received the news through his spies that Goddard was to proceed to Bombay from Surat with a view to renewing hostilities against the Marathas. He, therefore, ordered Visajipant Lele, the commandant of the Vasai fort, to cut down trees along the Surat-Bombay routes via Vasai and Kohaj[12] and block them in order to prevent Goddard's march.[13]

In the month of April 1780, Goddard had sent the Bombay detachment under Colonel Hartley back to Bombay from the Gujrat front. Before Hartley could reach Bombay, the Bombay Government decided to give fright to the Maratha army. At the beginning of the year 1780, Bajipant Anna Joshi and Sakharampant Panse,[14] two Maratha commanders sent from Pune by the Ministers, sweeped down the Borghat and attempted to block the routes of the Bombay army at different places. To counteract this move on the part of the Marathas, the Bombay Government planned an operation based on three Principles of War. The first was to be on the offensive. The second was to make surprise assaults and the third was to take possession of key centres and posts of the enemy useful for provision and reconoissance.[15]

As per the plan of operation, a contingent from Thane garrison under Captain Richard Campbell captured the fort

of Persik near Thane by a surprise attack on the 12th April, 1780.[16] The same day Captain John Lendrum's detachment escaladed the fort of Belapur and brought it under the British control.[17] The fort of Belapur 'is so situated as effectually to command the entrance into Panwell river'.[17-a] It serves as a guardian fort of the islands of Bombay, Karanja and Hog. Similarly, the fort of Persik is a sentinel of Thane and the island of Sashti. The British made sufficient storage of foodgrains in these two forts. They also served as watch-posts to keep watch on any surprise movements of the Maratha army.[18]

After the fort of Belapur, the guardian fort of the Panvel Creek, fell to the British arms, the next target of the British commanders was the port of Panvel itself. The port of Panvel was a centre of strategic importance from the British point of view. It had served as a strong operational base in the first British Borghat expedition, as the Maratha navy was too weak to oppose the British in the Panvel Creek. For launching another offensive against the Marathas, the same port (Panvel) was more useful than any other port which the British possessed round about the Bombay island.

Captain John Lendrum, with a force of about five hundred men, landed at Panvel by means of ships on the 13th April, 1780. He stationed his troops near a temple which was situated in the vicinity of a pond.[19] There were three hundred Gardis among the British soldiers. The Marathas had only two hundred Gardis at Panvel to guard that place. They

were commanded by two Gardi Jamatdars, Ajij Khan and Abu Sheikh. Naro Vishno, a Brahmin, was looking after the security arrangements at Panvel. Upto the 12th April 1780, he succeeded somehow in persuading the Gardis to remain at Panvel.[20] On the 13th, the Gardis on the Maratha side had a brush with the Gardis on the British side, who were advancing from their camp near the temple mentioned above. The Gardis on the Maratha side had no equipment like heavy guns or cannon. The Gardis on the British side had four swivel guns (jamburās). They fired these guns on the Gardis under Abu Sheikh and Ajij Khan. Abu Sheikh and Ajij Khan fought bravely, but ultimately they had to retreat towards the village Palaspe, which is situated about three miles to the south of Panvel. Naro Vishnu wanted to take positions at Palaspe and attack the British. But as he had no fire rockets and rocketeers, he could not execute his plan. He was also suffering from shortage of money and supplies. While he was preparing for an attack on the enemy, he received a letter from Govind Ram Karlekar, who was a Mamlatdar of Kalyan Taluka, instructing him to proceed to Kalyan, as there was a danger of his being encircled by the enemy. Naro Vishnu followed the instruction and went to Kalyan with Abu Sheikh and Ajij Khan.[21] After their retreat, Captain Lendrum captured Panvel the very day (13th April, 1780) and encamped there.[22]

The annual revenue of Belapur and Panvel put together

was two lakhs of rupees. This proved to be an additional source of income to the treasury of the Bombay Government.

After capturing Panvel, the British established strong guarding posts in the villages situated on the route between the forts of Persik and Belapur. They also shifted their cannon from Panvel to Taloji,[23] a village about twelve miles to the south of Kalyan. Their next target was the town and port of Kalyan. The Marathas had a guard-post (chowki) at Thakurali, a village about three miles to the south-west of Kalyan. In the first week of May,1780, the Gardis on the British side started reconoissance trips round about Kalyan at night. There were minor skirmishes between these Gardis and the Maratha guards at Thakurali. Govind Ram Karlekar, the Mamlatdar of Kalyan Taluka, complained to Nana that he had no money in making payments to the Gardis and other Maratha soldiers and that if he approached the money-lenders, they were not ready to give him loans.[24] This was surely an indication of the deteriorating financial condition of the Pune Government.

On the 10th May, 1780, a detachment under Captain Campbell entered Kalyan via the southern land-route from the village Taloje as well as via the naval route of Kalyan-Bhivandi Creek.[25] The same day they bombarded the town of Kalyan continuously for about five hours in the morning. The Maratha cavalry units and the Gardis at Kalyan, could not withstand the enemy fire and retired to the village of Mulgao,[26] situated about thirty-five miles to the south-east of

Kalyan. Thus Kalyan surrendered to the British on the very first day (10th May, 1780) they entered that town.[27]

Bajipant Anna Joshi and Sakharampant Panase, the two Maratha commanders, attacked Kalyan to recapture it. Numerically the Marathas outnumbered the British, but Captain Campbell and Major Westphal resisted the Maratha assault valiantly till the 23rd May. On the 24th, Colonel Hartley, who had returned from Gujrat campaign, proceeded to the rescue of Kalyan. He made a vigorous attack on the Maratha troops under the command of Bajipant Joshi and Sakharampant Panase, which had stationed at Vithalwadi, a village about four miles to the south-east of Kalyan.[28] When Bajipant and Sakharampant were engaged in fixing different places for their different contingents (Marathi word Misalī) for making a charge on the enemy, Hartley's gunners suddenly discharged volleys after volleys (Marathi word silakā) of flintlocks and cannon on them. As Hartley had skilfully made a night assault, there was confusion in the Maratha rank and file due to pitch darkness. As a result, a number of soldiers and horses were wounded on the Maratha side.[29] Next day Hartley made another attack and drove the Maratha troops in the direction of the Borghat.[30]

Bajipant Joshi and Sakharampant, who had retreated towards the Borghat, encamped at Neral,[31] a village which is about twenty miles to the S.E. of Kalyan on the Pune-Bombay road. The British forces also advanced from Kalyan in pursuit of the Maratha army. There was an engagement between the two

at Badalapur.[32] Here, the Marathas, instead of giving a running battle, which was their usual mode of warfare, resorted to positional warfare. The Gardis on the Maratha side fired rockets (agnibānās) and cannon-shots from behind a very strong cover (dhāsana). They repulsed the first frontal attack of the British, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy. But the British made a two-pronged second attack. The severity of the British fire forced the Maratha soldiers including the Gardis to retreat. Bajipant Joshi and Sakharampant Panse then fell back on Neral and encamped there. This encounter took place on the 30th May, 1780.[33]

The social effects of the above two encounters were disastrous. Laxman Hari Lagu, one of the Mamlatdars of Nana Phadnis, has described these ill effects in one of his letters to Nana. He remarks, "There was great chaos in the territories (in which the Marathas and the British fought). Women and children (deserted their village and) took shelter in forests."[34] This shows the plight of a common man, who was helpless when different powers fought between themselves, in the mediaeval age. The common man had absolutely no say in the political matters. Naturally, his attitude was one of apathy towards the political affairs.

In the first week of June 1780, the British forces returned to Kalyan from Badalapur. Then Bajipant Joshi and Sakharampant Panase advanced from Neral to Badalapur.[35] As the monsoon was approaching near, both the Maratha and the British commanders decided to encamp where they were.

By this time the British had taken possession of a territory, triangular in shape, whose eastern points was Kalyan, western points the forts of Persik and Thane and the southern point, the entrance of Panvel creek and the fort of Belapur. The fort of Malanggad provided the central link to this triangular territory. So the Bombay Government decided to storm it by surprise.

Ten miles south of Kalyan, a strong hill-fort, known from the broken line of its basalt crest as the Cathedral Rock, is one of the most picturesque of Thane hills. It is also known as Malanggad or Bawa Malang.[36] It stands on the border line of the Talukas of Kolaba and Ulhasnagar (formerly Taluka Kalyan). Surrounded by Bombay and Sashti islands on the west, Karanja and Uran islands on the south-west, Borghat, Bhimashankar and Malsej Ghats on the east and Kalyan on the north, it commands a very large tract from the Borghat to Kalyan.

The summit of the rock on which Malanggad is built appears like a three storeyed building. After climbing nearly 1800 feet from the foot of the hill, one reaches its first storey, which is a vast plateau with numerous trees. On this plateau stands the tomb or the Darga of Haji Malang, the famous Sufi Saint. The plateau starts at a short distance in front of the Darga and ends at a place known as Panch Pir (Five Pirs), which is situated on the precipice of the projection of a rock. These five pirs, whose names are unknown, are supposed to have accompanied Bawa Malang. The

Marathas named this plateau as 'Pir Machi' after Bawa Malang and his five Pirs.

The plateau of Pir Machi is nearly 2500 feet long and 1000 feet broad. It was a very convenient place for the fort garrison to stay on. Why it was called Machi baffles any explanation. It does not show any of the characteristic features of a typical 'Mācī'[37] of a Maratha hill-fort.

The Pir Machi starts the ascent of the second storey. There are rock-cut steps which lead to the second stage of the fort. After climbing a steep ascent of nearly 300 feet, one reaches this second stage or storey, known as the Lower Fort. It was called Son Machi by the Marathas. It is the projection of a rock approximately 300 feet long (east-west) and 70 feet broad (north-south). Its shape is like the trunk of an elephant.[38]

In some respects, the Son Machi had the characteristics of a Machi, while in other it differed from it. It had a strong bastion on its two sides, east and west, but it had neither a parapet wall nor machicolations to fire at the approaching enemy. The peculiarity of the Son Machi is that it is not a mere part of the Lower Fort; it itself is the Lower Fort. Contrary to this, we find that the Machis of the hill-forts like Rajgad, Purandar and Torna, which are situated not far away from Pune, form only particular sections of the outer or inner forts.

Most of the hill-forts in Maharashtra have two or three gate-ways and many towers, but the Malanggad fort has only one

gate-way of extraordinarily small size and one tower, which is also not independent but a supporting part of the gate-way. Malanggad fort is one of those rare forts which are completely dependent on natural defence. The absence of a parapet wall, machicolations and Muslim architecture in its structure and of mortar in the construction of its bastion and tower reveal its long antiquity. It was probably built in the Yadav period.

Above the gate-way of the Son Machi, there is another hill, an exceedingly narrow strip less than 300 yards long. The precipice which surrounds it is in most cases a complete natural defence. The Lower Fort had a small reservoir, giving sufficient supply of water to the garrison. From the Lower Fort to the Upper Fort or the Citadel, there is a perpendicular ascent of 200 feet by means of a narrow flight of rock-hewn steps, on the face of the precipice, so steep as to make the ascent at all times most difficult and dangerous. The Citadel, a space of 200 yards long by about 70 yards broad, is the summit of the third and uppermost hill. It had no fortifications but had an enclosure. The water supply was from a range of five cisterns and a copper pipe was used to carry water to the Lower Fort.[39]

There were three or four routes through which the Marathas could carry provisions and succour to the garrison of Malanggad via Kalyan. The Belapur-Panvel-Taloji-Kalyan-Malanggad route was from the south-western side of ~~the~~ Malanggad. The northern route was from Kalyan to Malanggad.

There were also two routes from the south of Malanggad. The Borghat-Madh-Khalapur-Chowk-Vavanje-Kalyan-Malanggad[40] was one and the Borghat-Khopoli-Karjat-Neral-Peb-Kalyan-Malanggad[41] was another. From the eastern side it was possible for the Marathas to go to the rescue of Malanggad, via Bhimashankar and Kusur Ghats.[42] Lohgad, Rajmachi and Visapur forts were the centres of logistical support and supplies to the south of Malanggad.[43] The forts like Siddhagad, Gorakshagad and Bahiravagad on the eastern side of Malanggad also used to furnish provisions to it on a small scale.[44] In the summer of 1780, the British blocked the northern route from Kalyan and the south-western route from Panvel.

With a view to preventing the Marathas from harassing the British with their guerilla tactics in the surrounding areas of Vasai and Kalyan in the monsoon period of 1780, the Bombay Council had posted Major Hopkins and Captain Abbington with sufficient garrison in reserve at Kalyan. Being fully aware of the Maratha methods of military operations, the Bombay Council planned to assault Malanggad during rainy season. Usually the Maratha soldiers retired to their homes to engage themselves in agricultural operations during the rainy season. It was a good piece of military strategy on the part of the British to attack Malanggad during that season, as the Marathas would least expect them to start any major military action with the help of their artillery in a territory where the monsoon rains were heavy.

Major Hopkins sent Abbington with an infantry unit of 350 soldiers to storm Malanggad on the 4th August, 1780. Malanggad is surrounded on three sides by hills and mountains. Except from the Kalyan side it is completely protected by natural rocks on all the other sides. Like Vishalgad near Kolhapur, it is very difficult to make a complete blockade of this fort. The only vulnerable point in its defence was the Pir Machi, which was the first stage of the fort. The Pir Machi had neither any natural protection nor was it protected by any fortification. The plateau of Pir Machi was too vast for such a fortification to be constructed. At the foot of Malanggad is a very small village named Bandhanwadi. The only accessible route to reach the Pir Machi and the Bale Killa from the foot of Malanggad was via Bandhanwadi. The region between Kalyan and Bandhanwadi was unfavourable for the movements of cavalry and artillery, as the ground here was undulating. The road from Bandhanwadi to the Pir Machi, an ascent of nearly 1800 feet, was narrow but not difficult for besieging troops to go up.

As Kalyan-Bandhanwadi was the only route leading to the fort of Malanggad, Abbington advanced with his troops via Kalyan and encamped at Bandhanwadi at the foot of Malanggad hill. As the Maratha garrison of the fort was least expecting an attack from the enemy, there were only 300 soldiers on the Pir Machi[45] for the protection of the fort. Pandurang Sambhaji Ketkar[46] was the commandant of the fort appointed

by Nana Phadnis before the British attacked it. Due to the insufficient number of troops and vulnerability of the Pir Machi, it fell into the hands of the British without offering much resistance on the 4th August,1780, the very first day of the British operation. Pandurang Sambhaji then retreated to the Son Machi or the Lower Fort with only 125 soldiers. The remaining soldiers from the fort garrison came to Gangadhar Ram Karlekar,who was the Mamlatdar of Taluka Kalyan, as there was no accommodation on the Son Machi, which had very narrow space.[47] He had with him the store of food-grains and other supplies sufficient for two months.

After taking possession of the Pir Machi, Abbington's troops encamped there. His first task was to keep his line of communication in the rear intact and free from the Maratha raids. He established some guarding posts at Bandhan-wadi. From Bandhanwadi, Kalyan was at a distance of about 10 miles. As Panvel and Kalyan were in the British hands, Abbington's rear and line of supplies were safe. Kalyan was his base of operation.

With a view to assessing the strategic importance of Malanggad, Abbington conducted its survey. He found in the survey that there was dense forest on the eastern side of the fort known as the forest of Vasangi. Abbington hired some fifty to seventy-five local labourers who cleared a part of the forest and laid a good pathway from the foot of the fort to the Pir Machi.[48] He closed down all other paths and by-ways and posted there nearly forty to fifty Kolis

(fishermen) to guard them.[49] All these events took place in the first two weeks of August,1780.

By this time Nana Phadnis sent Gangadhar Ram Karlekar[50] and Kashipant[51] to raise the siege of the fort. However, the blockade of the Malanggad fort by the British was so effective that Pandurang Sambhaji and Gangadhar Ram Karlekar could not keep contact with each other through their messengers.[52]

After completing the blockade of the fort from the Kalyan side, Abbington brought three cannon of medium and small size on the plateau of the Pir Machi. He erected his batteries near the Darga of the Muslim Saint Bawa Malng and started cannonading the gateway of the Lower Fort or Son Machi, where the Maratha soldiers had taken shelter after the fall of the Pir Machi.

The Son Machi was only 300 feet long and approximately 70 feet broad. It could accommodate only 150 to 200 men at the most. The Son Machi has five major parts. The first is the ascent of approximately 250 to 300 feet from the Pir Machi to the Son Machi. After this ascent, there is a small plain ground exactly below the projected part of the Son Machi. This forms the second part of the Son Machi. The Son Machi is ~~only~~ about 90 feet above this plain ground. It was very easy for the fort garrison in the Son Machi to throw stones and hurl rockets, spears and arrows at the enemy soldiers fighting on the plain ground below the Machi or on the plateau of the Pir Machi. From the plain ground rock-cut

steps lead to a small door-way of the Son Machi. This is the third part of that Machi. These steps are so narrow that only two or three persons can ascend them at a time. Naturally, it was easy for the garrison to encounter the enemy. After entering the door-way one enters the Son Machi itself after taking a left turn. The middle portion of the Machi was known as Kamaragā.[53] It forms the fourth part of the Machi. The fifth and last part of the Son Machi is its trunk, a narrow edge or precipice of a rock, which was called the sond of the Son Machi.

The Son Machi had a strong rampart wall on its east and west sides, but its remaining two sides were naturally impregnable. The only weak link between the Pir Machi and the Son Machi was the small door through which one could enter the latter. Observing this weak point, Abbington started firing at the gateway of the Son Machi forty to fifty shots daily from 7th August to 15th August 1780. However, the gateway was so situated that it was not properly visible from the Pir Machi. Besides, the ascent of the fort from the Pir Machi to the Son Machi being very steep and perpendicular, the gunners of Abbington could not find a suitable place to aim their cannon shots at the door-way. Naturally, they could not adjust their guns to a proper angle. Their firing, therefore, was wasted as all the shots either exploded in the air or fell beyond the opposite side of the fort. On the 14th August, Abbington brought a new gunner from Kalyan. Due to his skill, some of the cannon shots hit the gateway

of the Lower Fort. As a result the gateway was damaged but it did not collapse.[54]

The Marathas on their side were not inactive. Under the leadership of Pandurang Sambhaji, they also retaliated by firing a hundred shots daily at the besiegers. The supplies of foodgrains and the troops at his disposal being limited, Pandurang Sambhaji was entirely dependent on the reinforcements which Nana Phadnis would sent from outside. He was anxiously waiting for succour from Pune.

In spite of all the precautions taken by Abbington to blockade the main route and guard the other possible routes to the fort, he was not able to trace some of the secret spots and pathways in the dense jungle of Vasangi, which led to the fort above in different directions. The Marathas knew one spot in the forest of Vasangi which lay to the east side of Malanggad, where the British could have erected their batteries and effectively storm the Lower Fort or the Son Machi. However, the jungle was too thick to carry the cannon through it. The Marathas also knew two secret pathways through the jungle leading to the Son Machi. One of these pathways passed through a gateway or a door which had been constructed some time back by the present commandant of the Siddhagad fort. The other secret pathway passed by the Kusavali[55] gate and ended just below the trunk of the Son Machi. It was the intention of Gangadhar Ram Karlekar to steal his way by the aforesaid two secret paths and drive away the Kolis posted by Abbington to guard the jungle of Vasangi.[56]

But the manpower at his disposal fell short of the required strength to execute his plan. He repeatedly requested Anandrao Dhulap[57] and Kashipant, who had been sent to the rescue of Malanggad by Nana Phadnis, to proceed to the fort expeditiously.

Kashipant was encamping at Neral with his Gardis[58] and Anandrao Dhulap was at Samalpur,[59] a place not very far from Neral.[60] Inspite of Gangadhar Ram's requests, both Dhulap and Kashipant failed to understand the gravity of the situation. They did not show any inclination to advance rapidly towards Malanggad. At last Gangadhar Ram went to Samalpur in person and retorted Dhulap, "The commander of Malanggad is trying his best against the enemy, but you are simply viling away your time!"[61] At this Dhulap promised Gangadhar Ram that he would march to Neral immediately. Gangadhar Ram then went to Neral, but Dhulap did not keep up his word. Meanwhile Kashipant received a personal letter from Nana Phadnis to proceed to Malanggad without further delay. Yet he was not keen to follow the instructions of Nana.[62]

Dhulap and Kashipant, instead of going personally to Malanggad, asked Gangadhar Ram to go there with some of their select men. Gangadhar Ram was a wise man. He himself did not proceed. He sent an infantry division of seven hundred of which two hundred were under his personal command and the rest under Bajipant Anna Joshi and Kashipant, with his (Gangadhar Ram's) nephew and clerk. Anandrao Dhulap and Kashipant, however, neither personally went with ~~his~~ Gangadha

contingent of seven hundred men nor did they send any of their civil or military officers with it. The result of such carelessness and indifference on the part of the Maratha officers was inevitable. The contingent marched leaderless and was left to seek its own way out. The Maratha soldiers advanced upto the fort of Malanggad, but refused to move further without any commander to lead them. Gangadharpant was confident that he would be able to take this contingent of seven hundred soldiers to its destined place by secret routes with the help of his two hundred men, who knew the ins and outs of the Malanggad fort, but being a Mamlatdar, he could not command the respect of the Maratha soldiers.[63]

It would be interesting to investigate the causes of this striking inactivity or lethargy on the part of the Maratha commanders and officers when the situation demanded immediate action. The causes may be found in the political situation prevailing in the Maratha State, particularly after the assassination of Narayanrao Peshwa. Due to the premature death of Narayanrao and the infancy of the new Peshwa Sawai Madhavrao, the control of the Pune Government fell into the hands of the Karbharis or administrators who failed to inspire confidence in the Maratha confederacy. This rendered the central government of the Marathas weak. The Karbharis could not keep strict control over the Maratha sardars and jahgirdars, which Peshwa Madhavrao I had succeeded in keeping. This might have led perhaps to the slow movements of the Maratha cavalry officers. It might have been also due

to complete lack of co-ordination in planning the military operations. Perhaps it was not a carefully thought out and well organised expedition.

The military organization of the Marathas even in the 18th century was essentially feudal in character. The soldiers respected the chief who collected and recruited them rather than the Commander-in-Chief of the army. In fact there was no such supreme post of a Commander-in-Chief in the Maratha armies of the latter half of the 18th century. The sardars and saranjamadars supplied the quota of army. There was no regular standing army. This caused lack of unity and control which further affected the mobility of the army.

On the 28th August 1780, Anandrao Dhulap, Kashipant and Gangadhar Ram Karlekar left Neral and reached Kharawai, a village 32 miles to the south-east of Kalyan. In the meanwhile Captain Abbington, who was storming the Lower Fort of Malanggad from the Pir Machi, decided to capture it by escalade. By escalading some of his troops succeeded in reaching the base of the Son Machi. Here the ground was plain. From this plain ground nearly two hundred and fifty British soldiers attempted to scale the gateway of the Machi with the help of two ladders on the 1st September 1780. But these movements of the enemy were noticed by the garrison stationed on the Son Machi. It immediately replied with musket firing and hurled rockets and stones on the enemy. The Maratha fire took a toll of nearly fifty to seventy-five British

soldiers, most of whom were found dead or lying wounded near the gate. As compared to this, the Marathas lost only two soldiers and one was severely wounded by burns. This Maratha firing struck such a terror in the hearts of the British that some of the Kolis assisting them took shelter in a small cave like pit (Gadad)[64] under the Son Machi for nearly three days.[65]

The Maratha counter-attack was so severe that there was no other go for Abbington but to withdraw his cannon from the Pir Machi and remove it to Taloje, a village nearly five miles to the southwest of Malanggad. They also dismounted the Union Jack which had been hoisted on the Pir Machi and dismantled their guarding posts on the eastern side of Malanggad. These activities on the part of the British reduced the pressure they had exerted on the garrison of Malanggad considerably. Taking advantage of this, Gangadhar Ram managed to send supplies of foodgrains and other stores to the garrison by hiring some labourers. The supplies reached safely to the garrison without any interruption.[66]

In the meantime Nana Phadnis sent Balaji Vishwanath Phatak[67] and Ragho Vishwanath Godbole[68] with troops to raise the siege of Malanggad. When Balaji Vishwanath and Ragho Vishwanath were on the march, Kashipant and Dhulap left Kharwai and reached Maldunge.[69] Balaji Vishwanath and Ragho Vishwanath advanced rapidly and encamped at Khopoli.[70]

The Pune Government had assigned half of the total annual revenue income of the village Dhokegao[71] in the paragana of

Ambarnath for the worship of the Darga of Bawa Malang. The remaining half was collected by the Pune Government. In this context Gangadhar Ram Karlekar requested Nana Phadnis in one of his letters, "I have made a vow before the Pir that 'if you protect the fort from the enemy, I will see that the Pune Government will give an assignment of all the annual revenue income of the village Dhokegao for your worship.' As I have made this vow before the Pir, you should grant my request."[72] Gangadhar Ram believed that because of the grace of the Pir, the garrison could repulse the enemy attack. His above request to Nana throws light on the religious sentiments of the Marathas. The Marathas, like most of the other Hindus, respected saintly persons, be they of any caste, creed or religion.

In the first week of September 1780, Gangadhar Ram halted at Shiravali, a village situated about 3 miles to the north of Malanggad. Kashipant and Dhulap joined him in the next week. They were followed by Balaji Vishwanath and Ragho Vishwanath. However, these Maratha officers could not proceed to Malanggad by the south-western route via Panvel, as that place was still in the possession of the British. They, therefore, took the route via Maldunge-Vangani-Taloje and reached Shiravali near the foot of Malanggad where they encamped. The British estimated this Maratha force at 3000.[73]

The Maratha army included the non-fighting forces as well, which were left at Shiravali and only the picked troops were despatched to expel the British forces from the Machi

of Malanggad. Anandrao Dhulap was the first to reach the Pir Machi. He destroyed two English posts on the Machi, but was not successful in driving them out completely. Then Kashipant followed him. But his attempts, like those of Anandrao, proved to be abortive. These attacks were launched before the 15th September, 1780.

Ragho Vishwanath Godbole ascended the Pir Machi on the 16th September, leaving Balaji Vishwanath Phatak at the foot of the hill. Ragho Vishwanath had a gardi unit under him. The firing of the Rohillas from the Gardi unit silenced the British cannon on the Pir Machi. The English then removed their cannon near the Darga of Bawa Malang, whereupon the Rohillas on the Maratha side advanced and erected their batteries on the very spot where the British had previously erected their batteries. The Maratha soldiers climbed up from the northern side of the Pir Machi, which was fortified by a ditch. This ditch was the dividing line between the two warring groups. The Marathas occupied the east side of the ditch, whereas the British took positions on its west side. The distance between the two was hardly 200 feet.[74]

So far the Maratha commanders were carrying on their operations against the British individually. Realising their mistake Dhulap, Ragho Vishwanath and Kashipant planned a united and concerted attack against the enemy on the 18th September. But unfortunately, the weather was unfavourable for a massive attack. The previous day there was a slight drizzle of rain, but on the 18th and the 19th it rained cats

and dogs. The Marathas who were very eager to oust the British, could not move an inch due to slippery and slashy ground. Thus the whole plan of united action was dashed to the ground. Balaji Vishwanath was extremely disappointed for the lost opportunity. He describes with a heavy heart how the attempts to launch a united attack failed miserably.[75]

Could we blame Nature for this failure on the part of the Marathas? Perhaps we have to trace the reasons for this in the methods adopted by them. Had they planned a united attack at the outset, the picture would have been entirely different, and fortune might have smiled on them.

But this is not enough. We have to take into account the composition of the Maratha army during this period. It was certainly not a homogeneous unit like that of Shivaji. The circumstances necessitated the inclusion of heterogeneous elements in organizing the Maratha armies of the 18th century. The Arabs, the Rohillas and the Jats, commonly known as the Gardis, who were more advanced than the Marathas in the techniques of western warfare based on trained infantry and powerful artillery, were employed in the Maratha infantry in the later half of the 18th century. The torrential rains on the 18th and 19th September made the Gardis on the Maratha side completely nervous and inactive. The Marathas could not take the benefit of their skill in gunnery, when it was most expected in a critical situation.

The peculiarity of the Gardis was that they were good fighters on the plains, as they were trained in the western

type of warfare based on the coordination between infantry and artillery. However, they were useless in the guerilla type of warfare and siege-fighting, especially in sieges of hill-forts. Guerilla warfare and sieges of hill-forts require patience and stamina which the Gardis lacked. This is quite evident from the remark of Balaji Vishwanath Phatak who writes in one of his letters,

"The Gardis, Arabs, and Rohillas are quite useful when fighting takes place on plains and in dry weather. They are also of good help in the sieges of land-forts. However, I have now (during this siege of Malanggad) realised how worthless they are in ~~maintaining~~ mountain warfare. (Henceforward) if the inhabitants in the mountainous regions like the Mavales[76] and the Hetkaris[77] are employed in the mountain warfare, they alone would prove their worth to our master."[78] This is a very good example of introspection or realisation on the part of the Marathas. We come across such introspection very often in the letters and papers related to the siege of Malanggad. This example shows that the Marathas were conscious of their defects and shortcomings. The thing to be regretted is that they were not prompt enough in improving upon them. They could have avoided the deployment of Gardis in the siege of Malanggad.

The heavy rains proved beneficial to the British. The soldiers of Abbington fired briskly, holding firmly their positions near the Darga of Bawa Malang. Abbington got sufficient time to send his messengers to Kalyan and inform

Major Westfal, who was in charge of the Kalyan garrison, about the danger in which he was involved. Major Westphal asked the officers at Thane to send a detachment of sepoys as well as supplies to Abbington on the 13th September,[79] and sent a contingent from Bhivandi to Malanggad. These movements of the British proved harmful to the Marathas. The troops from Bhivandi cut off their supplies and constantly hovered round Kalyan. Thus the Marathas camping at the foot of the Malanggad fort did not get their regular supplies. Further, the British troops attacked the non-fighting forces of the Marathas stationed at the foot of Malanggad on the 18th September. This British attack coincided with the united Maratha attack on the Pir Machi on the same day. The non-fighting forces of the Marathas were compelled to run away. With the arrival of the supporting division and with it the ample supply of grains and ammunition,[80] the morale of the British troops was boosted while that of the Maratha soldiers sunk low. This event turned the course of the fighting.

The non-combatants on the Maratha side were so frightened that they ran away and halted at a place, six miles away from Malanggad. The successful tactics of the British in cutting off supplies affected the Marathas very badly. The Marathas had to face starvation, as their line of supplies in the rear was cut off by the enemy. Due to heavy rains, their stores of foodgrains, fodder and ammunition were depleted and spoiled rapidly. Balaji Vishwanath Phatak has graphically

described this grave situation in the following words: "Our first difficulty is that we are facing the British fire which is destructive or diabolical. Secondly, we have been starving for the last three four days. Our third difficulty is the heavy rains which has made the ground slippery and slashy. All of us are completely drenched and could hardly get our daily wages. We are in such a pitiable condition. Our condition would have been better if only we could get a piece of bread every day to eat."[81] This graphic description is in a way useful in getting some idea of the camp-life of the Marathas. Shortage of supplies and money causing a great deal of distress was a regular phenomenon of the Maratha camp. It may be recalled here the conditions prevailing at the time of the third battle of Panipat in 1761. The extant letters of this period of the first Anglo-Maratha War are full of complaints regarding deficiencies in supplies.

The causes of the economic distress caused by the shortage of supplies may be found in the defects of the economic system of the later Peshwa period. Firstly, there was a growing tendency among the sardars and officers of this period to loot their own subjects. This tendency was not new to the later Peshwa period; it was prevalent in the past also. The only difference was that this tendency grew out of proportion after the murder of Narayanrao Peshwa in 1773. The Marathi records relating to the period of the

first Anglo-Maratha War are replete with the acts of looting on the part of prominent Maratha sardars. In 1774, when the British attacked Sashti (Salsette), the local people joined hands with them,because the Marathas harassed them a great deal.[82]

The second cause of the shortage of money was that the Marathas were not wise enough to make an emergency provision. The strength of the garrison of Malanggad during normal circumstances was nearly a hundred and fifty. For the maintenance of this garrison, the revenues of Gorath and Korkada, two Mahals in the Kalyan Subha, had been assigned to the fort. After the siege of the fort by the British,there were additions to the existing garrison. Besides, Gangadhar Ram Karlekar had to employ the services of Kolis (fishermen) to carry supplies to the fort. Naturally the expenses increased, which the usual annual sources of revenue could not meet. There was no separate provision for contingency expenses. Seeing that the economic conditions of the Maratha State were in a bad shape, the money-lenders refused to give loans to the Mamlatdar. Thus the financial position of the Maratha State further deteriorated.

As the Gardis and other Maratha soldiers did not receive their wages, they started harassing Balaji Vishwanath Phatak, who under pressure and distress requested Gangadhar Ram Karlekar to pay him ten thousand rupees. Gangadhar Ram was already spending four thousand rupees per month on account of the war with the British. Besides, he had to bribe the

Kolis to persuade them to carry ammunition and supplies to the garrison. The Kolis were after all mercenaries, who would join the British in case they were not handsomely paid by the Marathas.[84] As these Kolis knew all the secret routes and paths to and from Malanggad, Gangadhar Ram could not dispense with their services. He was caught on the horns of a dilemma,when his expenses were fast increasing while his income was dwindling due to the refusal of the ryots to pay their dues to him, as they had joined hands with the British. These factors had adverse affect on the activities of Gangadhar Ram, who could not meet the demands of Balaji Vishwanath and Ragho Vishwanath for additional supplies of money. At last Balaji Vishwanath and Ragho Vishwanath told him that they would take money from the annual revenues of the two Mahals, Gorath and Korkada.[85]

The Marathas seldom paid the army regularly. According to the Maratha practice, the payment of the army was not made through the royal treasury. The sardars received saranjam lands from the State for maintaining the quota of troops allotted to them. This saranjami system was the root cause of economic distress.

From the military point of view, the British assault of the 18th September was fruitful in two respects. They were successful, firstly, in breaking the line of supplies of the enemy and secondly, in shaking his morale. Still the Marathas continued to encamp at Shiravali, a village, which is situated about three miles to the north of Malanggad.

In retaliation, they closed all the routes leading to Malanggad from the north-east side. Thereupon the Bombay Council immediately despatched Colonel Hartley with troops, who took the route Belapur-Panvel-Taloje. This route led to Malanggad from its south-western side. From Kalyan Hartley proceeded towards Malanggad taking with him the 8th battalion of sepoys and two three pounders. He attacked the Maratha camp at Shiravali, drove the enemy away and himself encamped at the place. Some of the Maratha soldiers fled to the jungle of Peb[86] which is a village nearly six to seven miles to the south-east of Malanggad. But Gangadhar Ram, Balaji Vishwanath, Ragho Vishwanath, Anandrao, Dhulap and Kashipant went to Vavanje,[87] a village nearly two miles to the south-west of Malanggad and encamped there.

Colonel Hartley was in charge of the Shiravali post, but he left it for Kalyan after appointing Major Hopkins as its chief military officer with 7th and 8th battalions under him. Besides guarding his own post, Hopkins was expected to keep a watch on the fort of Malanggad.

After Hartley left for Kalyan, the Marathas camping at Vavanje, made a sudden raid on the battalions under Hopkins at Shiravali. They also attempted to cut off the lines of supplies of the British troops on the Pir Machi of Malanggad.[88] This event took place in the last week of September 1780. Major Hopkins communicated Hartley about the Maratha activities. In response, Hartley marched from Kalyan on the 4th October with two three pounders, one infantry division

from Kalyan and the first battalion of sepoys. He joined Hopkin's forces at the foot of Malanggad. Hartley then asked Captain Jameson of the 8th battalion to attack the enemy camp at Vavanje and capture his guns. Jameson was to attack the left flank of the Marathas. While he was on the march, Hartley was to provide him the cover of his artillery fire. After the Marathas at Vavanje came within the range of the fire of Jameson's 8th battalion, Hartley was to turn to the right and fire his cannon on the right flank of the Maratha camp. According to this plan, Jameson and Hartley advanced towards Vavanje. The Marathas also had advanced some distance from their camp at Vavanje in the direction of Malanggad. A severe action took place between the two armies, in which the Marathas fought every inch of the ground between Vavanje and the foot of Malanggad. Ultimately, they were caught between two fires, Jameson's forces firing on their left flank and Hartley's troops firing on their right. They had, therefore, to retreat. In the military parlance, the British won this action near Vavanje by their skilful manoeuvre of 'pincer movement'.[89] The British took thirteen prisoners, five of whom were wounded. On the English side, only four sepoys of the 8th battalion were wounded.[90]

Gangadhar Ram, Balaji Vishwanath and Ragho Vishwanath ran away from the camp at Vavanje and stopped at a village named Kurki.[91] On the 5th October, Hartley hotly pursued them. The Marathas then halted at Barwai.[92] This village is eight miles to the south-east of Panvel and three miles to

the north-west of Khalapur. Hartley pursued the Marathas upto Barwai and halted there.[93] On the arrival of the English at Barwai, the panic-stricken Maratha army dispersed immediately. Half of the army ran in the direction of Khopoli. The remaining half fled to Toopgao.[94] Gangadhar Ram has graphically described the low morale of the Maratha army in the following words:

"The sardars were standing till the enemy was visible. When the English marched within (their) range of firing, the whole contingent ran away... Even after seeing the English, not a single shot was fired at them. This is the condition of the Maratha army."[95] In another letter he remarks, "It is not proper that most of our cavalry officers are Brahmins. If all the cavalry units are abolished and they are organised into two units of one thousand and five hundred soldiers each under the command of Shamir Khan and Syed Ali, the two Gardi officers, then only our troops will give a good account of themselves... The Brahmin cavalry officers (risaldars) are afraid of death. (Out of fear) they remain behind the Gardis at a distance of one mile. Under such circumstances, how will our soldiers fight well and how will the enemy be defeated?"[96] These remarks reveal that the Marathas were not resorting to the tactics of successful retreat, but they were completely demoralised. After reaching Khopoli, the Marathas regained some of their lost courage. They decided to halt at Khopoli till fresh reinforcements received from Pune. Observing the futility of bringing the

Marathas to a pitched battle, Hartley gave up the pursuit. He left Barwai and marched to Moolgao where he established his camp.[97]

Before undertaking the pursuit of the Maratha army, Hartley had left behind Captain Carpenter with a battalion for the protection of Malanggad.[98] After the Maratha forces ran away from Vavanje,they could not keep any communication with Malanggad, as Hartley had blocked their rear. Still Anandrao Ram (Bivalkar?) and Balajipant Phatak managed somehow to provide the garrison of the fort three or four seers of tobacco. They also sent some men inside the fort by the secret routes which were unknown to the British. Carpenter decided to storm Malanggad before any substantial help reached it from outside. He posted some of his soldiers at the foot of the Son Machi or Lower Fort. At the same time he established some posts on the Pir Machi. Then two pieces of cannon were successfully drawn from the ascent of the Pir Machi to the foot of the Son Machi. The batteries were erected on the plain ground at the foot of the Son Machi. The cannon pieces were kept on the batteries with a view to firing at the gate of the Son Machi. Previously, Abbington had not been successful to erect a battery in the thick jungle of Vasangi. But by his skill and hard labour, Carpehter was successful in doing that also. Besides, he placed a small-size cannon piece (garnal) near the Pir Machi. Then simultaneously, the cannon opened fire from the

batteries on the Pir Machi, the foot of the Son Machi and the Jungle of Vasangi. The firing was well directed and very severe. The British cannon were pounding upon the gateway of the Lower Fort for four successive days from the 9th October to 12th October 1780. Nearly 350 soldiers were eagerly waiting for the final assault on it. However, the severity of the British attack could not dampen the spirit of bravery of Pandurang Sambhaji Ketkar and his two colleagues, Abu Sheikh Jamatdar and Aziz Khan Jamatdar. There was a cavelike hiding place exactly below the Son Machi, which was called Gadad.[100] On the 13th October, many of the British soldiers entered this gadad. From this gadad they launched the final assault on the gate of the Lower Fort. But Pandurang Sambhaji successfully repulsed this assault and beat the enemy back to his original positions. In this severe action the British suffered a loss of more than a hundred sepoys killed and wounded. On the Maratha side, some of the Gardis were wounded. Among them were Abu Sheikh and Ajij Khan.[101] It was creditable for Pandurang Sambhaji and his garrison that under severe pressure they were courageously and dauntlessly fighting the British onslaught in a helpless state, when the Maratha forces outside the fort were retreating without any show of resistance. When the British realised the futility of capturing the fort by assault, they decided to cut off its line of supplies and communication. In the month of November, they withdrew their cannon from the Machis of the

fort to the foot of the hill. They then established their camp at Thakurpada, a village very near the fort. They collected grains and articles from the surrounding areas of Malanggad and Kalyan. This resulted in the shortages of supplies for the Maratha garrison in the fort.[102]

Colonel Hartley was at Moolgao till the 30th October. From Moolgao he marched to Madh, a place nearly five miles away from Khopoli on the Bombay side of the Borghat and encamped there. He continued his halt there upto 21st November. Hartley was making these moves with two military objects in view. Firstly, he wanted to divert the major bulk of the Maratha army to Pune by feigning that he was to attack Pune itself by crossing the Borghat. Secondly, he wanted to obstruct the Maratha succour to the fort of Vasai. In the month of October last, Colonel Goddard and the Bombay Council had secretly planned an attack on the fort of Vasai. Hartley's obstruction of the Maratha army in the Borghat would serve Goddard's purpose. At Madh, Hartley had some minor skirmishes with the Maratha troops. He scored some minor victories and was successful in not allowing the Marathas to descend the Borghat and go ahead to the help of the Vasai fort. In this context Gangadhar Ram has regretfully remarked thus: "The Pune armies march from Pune and waste their time in discussing military plans at the Borghat. When will they expedite their march towards Malanggad and raise its siege?.... The strength of the present armies is sufficient for us to punish the army... if they march rapidly to Kalyan, the

siege of Malanggad will be raised and the succour will reach (the fort of) ~~the~~ Vasai."[103] The Marathas had no real idea about the strength of the army under Hartley. Gangadhar Ram's estimate about the number of Hartley's troops was one and half thousand infantry and five pieces of cannon.[104] A commander with the ability of Shivaji or Bajirao I would have properly assessed the strength of Hartley's forces, posted sufficient men near the Borghat to intercept him and with the remaining part of his army proceeded via Rajmachi Ghat to Malanggad and attacked the rear of the British forces at the foot of the Malanggad fort. Such a daring plan required mobile and well-knit army, which the Marathas of 1780 did not possess.

Due to the success of Hartley's troops, the attempt of the British to cut off the supplies of Malanggad proved effective. In the month of November 1780 the garrison again faced a shortage of stores and supplies, which was sufficient for only fifteen days.[105] Pandurang Sambhaji repeatedly requested Gangadhar Ram to send food-supplies, ammunition and tobacco. His insistence on sending tobacco shows that the Marathas were addicted to tobacco-eating. Without tobacco, they could not proceed with their work. In one of his letters Pandurang Sambhaji has requested Gangadhar Ram Karlekar thus: "We have no stock of tobacco and dal for the last fifteen days. The soldiers are suffering a great deal for want of tobacco. I cannot describe their suffering. It would be nice if you arrange for the despatch of one or two maunds

of tobacco to the fort by employing the services of Anandrao's (Dhulap) fishermen."[106] Pandurang Sambhaji fell ill in the month of October. Many of his soldiers also suffered the same fate. Still his patience was not exhausted. He was anxiously waiting for reinforcements from Nana Phadnis. At last fortune smiled on him. Nana Phadnis sent a large army under Chimapa Panase,[107] Kashipant, Bajipant Anna Joshi and Ramchandra Ganesh Kanade[108] to the rescue of Malanggad and Vasai.[109] The despatch of such a big army compelled Hartley to change his former plans. The spies of Hartley also brought news to him that Nana Phadnis and Haripant Phadke had encamped at Khandala with an army ten thousand strong, that they were to descend the Raj Machi Ghat and cut off his supplies and line of communication with Kalyan.[110] The major part of his food-supplies and ammunition had been stored at Kalyan.[111] Besides, his army was scattered at different places in small groups. In order to face the large army of the Marathas, it was necessary for him to unite them at one place. Therefore, he directed Major Carpenter, who was at Malanggad, to join him with his battalion.[112] In the meantime Nana Phadnis had instructed Vishwasrao Yashwant Panase[113] and Bhavani Shivram[114] to proceed to Malanggad with sufficient supplies for the garrison of the fort. He had also ordered Ramchandra Ganesh Kanade to march towards Vasai. As the British troops under Carpenter raised the siege of Malanggad in the third week of November, the task of Vishwasrao Yashwant and Bhavani Shivram proved to be easy. They immediately

sent grain supplies and three hundred men to the garrison of the Malanggad fort.[115]

Thus closed the first chapter in the third phase of the first Anglo-Maratha War. The next chapter of the siege of the Vasai fort began very soon.

The siege of Malanggad is indeed a romantic episode in the history of the Marathas. It has newly brought to light the role of Pandurang Sambhaji Ketkar whose valour and undaunted courage will ever win the admiration of all. He reminds us of Firangoji Narasala and Prayagaji Prabhu, who heroically defended the forts of Chakan and Satara against Shaista Khan and Aurangzeb respectively. The loyalty shown by two Gardi Jamadars, Ajij Khan and Abu Sheikh is equally commendable. The Pune Government presented them two palanquins as a token of their loyal service, but they politely refused to accept them, saying, "We are mere household servants (Shagirds). Of what use are the palanquins to us?"[116] Such loyal but humble servants are rare indeed!

Pandurang Sambhaji Ketkar continued to serve the Peshwa for eight more years. He died on the 24th July 1788 on account of abdominal dropsy. After him, his son Sadashivpant managed the affairs of the Malanggad fort.[117]

A study of the siege of Malanggad reveals that the Marathas could boast of their bravery and dexterity in holding the fort against many odds, but they could not boast of superiority over the British in the art and techniques of

fighting. It was only because of natural inaccessibility and peculiar construction of Malanggad that the British artillery proved ineffective against it, and they could not completely blockade the fort and cut off the line of supplies of the enemy, which gave the Maratha garrison a chance to prove their mettle. However, in coordination of planning, unity of command, mobility, manoeuvres and tactics, the British proved themselves to be far superior to the Marathas.

It is a common belief that the forts lost their historic significance in the 18th century. This may be true when the battles were fought in the open plains of the north. But when the warring parties were engaged in the hilly regions of the Deccan, beset with hill-forts, they could hardly neglect the strategic importance of the forts.

N O T E S

1 S.P.D.D. No. 20, p. 261.

2 F.D.S.C., 5th April, 1779, No. 2 (Anglo-Maratha Relations, p. 141).

3 This treaty has been discussed at the end of Chapter III of the present thesis.

4 S.P.D.D. No. 21, pp. 702-704; Sixth Report of the Committee of Secrecy, App. No. 245.

5 F.D.S.C. 23rd December, 1779, No. B (Anglo-Maratha Relations, p. 151).

6 C.P.C. Vol. 5, L. No.1857.

7 Forrest ; M.S., pp. 391-92.

8 Ibid., pp. 397-99.

9 Ibid., pp. 394-96.

10 H.P.M.S., p. 115.

11 Forrest ; M.S., pp. 410-411.

12 Kohaj is about ten miles to the west of the town Vade, Tal. Vade, Dist. Thane.

13 D.C.H.C., Rumal 80: File 13: Letter 5 (Appendix No. 1).

14 Sakharampant Panase was the fourth son of Yashwantrao Panase, who was in charge of Peshwa Bajirao II's artillery department. Bhivrao Yashwant Panase, who fought in the battle of Talegao of 1778-79, was the elder brother of Sakharampant; Sakharampant was present in the battle of Kharda of 1795.

15 S.P.D.D. No. 22, pp. 218-220.

16 Ibid., pp. 227-28.

17 Ibid., p. 230. P.T., Vol. 8, p. 467 (App. No. 2).

17-a Dickinson's Report (S.P.D.D. No. 314, p. 1178).

18 S.P.D.D.,No. 22, p. 278.

19 D.C.H.C., R80: F12: L5 (App. No. 4).

20 P.T., Vol. 8, p. 467 (App. No. 2).

21 P.T. Vol. 9, pp. 176-77 (App. No. 3); D.C.H.C., R80: F12: L.5 (App. No. 4); P.T., Vol. 9, pp. 178-79 (App. No. 5).

22 S.P.D.D.,No.22, pp. 230-32.

23 D.C.H.C., R80: F3: L23 (App. No. 6).

24 Ibid.

25 Ibid.

26 D.C.H.C., R.80: F.12: L.6, (App. No. 7).

27 S.P.D.D., No. 22, p. 278.

28 D.C.H.C., R.80: F38: L.140 (App. No. 8).

29 D.C.H.C., R.80: F14: L1 (App. No. 9).

30 Ibid; Forrest ; M.S., pp.418-419; D.C.H.C., R.80: F14: L2 (App. No. 10).

31 D.C.H.C., R.80: F14: L2 (App. No.10).

32 The village Badalapur is about fifteen miles to the S.E. of Kalyan on the Pune-Bombay road.

33 D.C.H.C., R.80: F14: L2 (App. No. 10).

34 D.C.H.C., R.80; F38: L1 (App. No. 11).

35 Ibid.

36 The oldest name connected by tradition with Malanggad is that of Nala Raja, who about 700 years ago, is said

to have lived on the hill and improved the ascent by laying down a line of iron steps. During his reign an Arab missionary, Haji Abdul Rahman, came with a number of followers and settled on the lower plateau of the hill. Later on he became famous as 'Haji Malang'. The exact period of his habitation on Malanggad is not known, but the fort was named after him. The original name of the fort as well as its history prior to the first Anglo-Maratha War are unknown.

The tomb of Haji Malang is situated on the lower plateau of Malanggad and every day thousands of people throng to his Darga to pay their respects to him. It has become a centre of pilgrimage to people of all religions, especially those living round about Bombay. On the full moon day of the month of Magh, a large festival is celebrated every year by the Hindus and Muslims from Kalyan, Thane and Bombay.

37 'Māchī' has been described as the trunk of a fort; It is a long and spacious part of a fort. The 'Rajya-vyavahārakosha', which was written by Raghunath Narayan Hanmante during Shivaji's period, describes 'Machi' as 'upatyakā', i.e. a plain ground near the top of the hill. It is usually less in height than the citadel.

38 In Marathi, the trunk of an elephant is called 'sond'. It is probable that the Lower Fort of Malanggad was first called 'Sond Machi' and later on came to be known as 'Son Machi'.

39 Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency, Vol. 14 (Thane District), 1882, pp. 220-223; Dickinson's Report (M.D.D., No.314, pp. 1160-63).

40 Forrest - M.S., pp.423-24.

41 D.C.H.C., Rumal No. 80, File No. 2, L.No.2 (App.No.14).

42 D.C.H.C., R.No. 80, F.No. 2,L.Nos. 6 and 6-A (App. Nos. 30 and 31).

43 D.C.H.C., R. 80, F. No. 1, L.No. 21.

44 D.C.H.C., R.80, F.No.1, L. No. 7.

45 D.C.H.C., R.80, F.2, L.No. 16 (App. No. 39).

46 Pandurang Sambhaji Ketkar is the ancestor of the present members of the Ketkar family who reside at Bandhanwadi or Brahmanwadi at the foot of Malanggad. Ganeshpant was the founder of this family, who hailed from the village Velas, Paragana Vesavi in Ratnagiri district. The Ketkar family resided at Velas till 1740. Sometime after 1740, the members of this family left Velas for the good, entered the Peshwa's service and shifted to Bandhanwadi at the foot of Malanggad. The exact date of their shifting to Bandhanwadi is not known. They have continued to reside at that place till to-day. In the middle of the 18th century the Ketkar family acquired the principal right to worship the Darga of Haji Malang. That right continues even to-day. How the Ketkar family came to be associated with the worship and the annual celebrations of the Darga of Haji Malang is not known. Pandurang Sambhaji belonged to the sixth

generation of the Ketkar family. Not much information is available regarding this family. The genealogy of the family is appended at the end of this chapter.

47 D.C.H.C., R80; F2; L16 (App. No.39); P.A., P.S.R., R.22 (App. No. 43); S.P.D.D. No. 23, pp. 147-148; P.A., P.S.R., R.21, L.12604; D.C.H.C.,R.80; F2; L2 (App.No.14).

48 D.C.H.C., Rumal No. 80, F.No.2, L.No. 28 (App.No.12).

49 D.C.H.C., R. 80; F.2; L.2 (App. No. 14).

50 Gangadhar Ram Karlekar and his brother Govind Ram Karlekar were joint Mamlatdars of Taluka Kalyan. Their duty was to collect revenue from this Taluka on behalf of the Pune Government. They were also responsible for making provisions of money, supplies etc. to the Maratha garrisons at different places within his jurisdiction during times of emergency. Their names appear in the Marathi records only in connection with the first Anglo-Maratha War. No other information is available about them.

51 Kashipant's full name is not known. His name often appears in the Marathi papers as Kashipant Mama, the last word meaning maternal uncle. One opinion is that he was the maternal uncle of Haripant Phadke.

52 D.C.H.C., R.80: F2: L2; (App. No.14).

53 Perhaps the word 'Kamaraga', is derived from the Marathi word 'Kamar' which means waist. Waist forms the middle part of the human body.

54 D.C.H.C., R.80: F2: L.2, 28, (App. No. 12).

55 This gate was on the side of the village Kushivali, which is situated only one mile to the north of Bandhanwadi.

56 D.C.H.R., R80: F2: L2 (App. No.14).

57 The family of Dhulaps was in charge of the Peshwa's naval fleet after Peshwa Nanasaheb destroyed the major part of Tulaji Angre's navy with the help of the British in 1755-56. Anandrao was the son of Rudraji Dhulap and the nephew of Janrao Dhulap. Rudraji and Janrao had distinguished themselves in the naval fights against Haidar Ali during the period of Peshwa Madhavrao I (See A.L. Vol. 4, L. 995).

58 The Gardis were the private guards of the Peshwas at Pune. It is a comprehensive term including the Arabs, the Rohillas and the Jats, etc. They were mercenaries and were ever ready to enter the services of any native or foreign Indian power in the 18th century, who paid them regularly. The Gardis were good infantrymen as they were well trained by the Europeans in the western type of warfare. They were employed by the Marathas since the time of Nanasaheb Peshwa and Sadashivrao Bhau. However, they entered the services of the Maratha sardars as infantrymen in large numbers in the last three decades of the 18th century.

59, 60 Neral is about 7 miles to the north of Karjat in district Kolaba. The village Samalapur cannot be traced in the maps. It is also not mentioned in Census Reports. Most probably it is a deserted place now.

61 D.C.H.C., R.80:F2:L2 (App. No. 14).

62 Ibid.

63 D.C.H.R., R80: F2: L9 (App. No. 17).

64 'Gadad' means a cave-like pit, specially carved out in a rock for the protection against an enemy.

65 D.C.H.C., R80: F2: L3, 4 (App. Nos.19, 21); R80: F10: L2, 13 (App. Nos. 20, 18).

66 D.C.H.C., R80: F2: L5. (App. No. 22).

67 Information regarding Balaji Vishwanath Phatak's family and designation is not available. He seems to be both a civil officer and a commander. During the first expedition of the Borghat (1778-79), he had captured Khopoli and broken the line of communication of the British in the war.

68 Ragho Vishwanath Godbole's name often appears in the Marathi records relating to the first Anglo-Maratha War. However his history is not known.

69 A village about 12 miles to the east of Panvel in Panvel Taluka of Kolaba district.

70 D.C.H.C., R.80:F2:L5 (App. No. 22).
Khopoli is situated at the foot of the Borghat or Khandala Ghat on the Bombay side on the Pune-Bombay road. It is about 65 miles to the south-east of Bombay and about 50 miles to the north-west of Pune.

71 Two and half miles to the south of Ambarnath and two miles to the north of Malanggad.

72 D.C.H.C., R.80: F2: L4 (App. No.21).

73 S.P.D.D., No. 23, pp. 146-147; Forrest ; M.S., p.423.

74 D.C.H.C., R80: F2: L12 (App. No.24); R.80: F.1:L19 (App. No.25).

75 D.C.H.C., R8O: F1:L19 (App. No. 25).

76 Inhabitants of the region along the eastern side of the Sahyadri range, known as the Maval region. They were expert footmen and excelled in mountain warfare. They first came to prominence under Shivaji, who raised a separate division of the Mavale infantry.

77 Inhabitants of the Konkan region who were expert marksmen. Like the Mavales, they also came to prominence in Shivaji's infantry divisions and fort-garrisons.

78 D.C.H.C., R8O:F1: L19 (App. No.25).

79 S.P.D.D., No. 23, p. 204.

80 D.C.H.C., R8O: F1:L19 (App. No. 25).

81 Ibid.

82 S.P.D., Vol. 35,L.108.

83 D.C.H.C., R8O:F2:L16 (App. No.39).

84 Ibid.

85 D.C.H.C.,R.8O: F1: L19 (App.No. 25).

86 S.P.D.D., No. 23, pp. 146-47.
There is a hill-fort near the village of Peb, which is known as the fort of Peb after the name of the village.

87 D.C.H.C., R8O: F2: L11; R8O: F1: L12 (App.Nos.29, 27).
In English records, the village Kaitpada is mentioned instead of the village Vavanje. (Forrest , M.S., p.423).

88 S.P.D.D., No. 23, pp. 146-47.

89 To catch the enemy between two flank movements like an object or article between two jaws of a pincers.

90 Forrest ; M.S., p. 423.

91 This village cannot be located on the map.

92 D.C.H.C., R80: F2: L11 (App. No. 29).

93 Ibid.

94 Toopgao is three miles to the N.E. of Khopoli near Borghat in District Kolaba.

95 D.C.H.C., R80: F2: L11 (App. No.29).

96 D.C.H.C., R.80:F2:L6A (App. No.31).

97 D.C.H.C., R80: F2: L7; Forrest ; M.S., p.424. Moolgao is 34 miles to the south-east of Kalyan, near the Pune-Bombay road. In the English records, it is mentioned as Koolgao.

98 S.P.D.D., No.23, p. 201.

99 D.C.H.C., R80: F10: L3.

100 This cave-like place is in existence even today.

101 D.C.H.C., R80:F10:L12 (App. No. 35).

102 Ibid.

103 D.C.H.C., R80: F2: L14 (App. No. 36).

104 D.C.H.C., R80: F2: L11 (App.No. 29).

105 D.C.H.C., R80: F10: L5 (App. No. 37).

106 D.C.H.C., R.80: F10: L.12 (App. No. 35).

107 Vishwasrao Yashwant alias Chimapa Panase, the fifth son of Yashwant Laxman Panase, who was in charge of Peshwa Bajirao I's artillery department.

108 Ramchandra Ganesh Kanade was a veteran Brahmin commander of the Peshwas. When Madhavrao I was the Peshwa, Ramchandra Ganesh distinguished himself in the affairs

of north India,especially in the Delhi expedition in 1768. Both Ramchandra Ganesh and Visaji Krishna Binivale worked in co-operation for some time in the northern affairs and became favourites of Peshwa Madhavrao I. But when a dispute arose between the two, afterwards, Ramchandra was called back to Pune by Peshwa Madhavrao.

109 D.C.H.C., R80: F10: L5 (App. No.37); R80; F2: L17.

110 Forrest,M.S., pp. 424-25.

111 Ibid., p. 428.

112 Ibid., p. 425.

113 Bhivrao Yashwant and Sakharam Yashwant were the elder brothers of Vishwasrao Yashwant. Vishwasrao had helped Mahadaji Shinde in the latter's expedition of Patthargad. He had also helped the Barbhais in their struggle against Raghunathrao Peshwa.

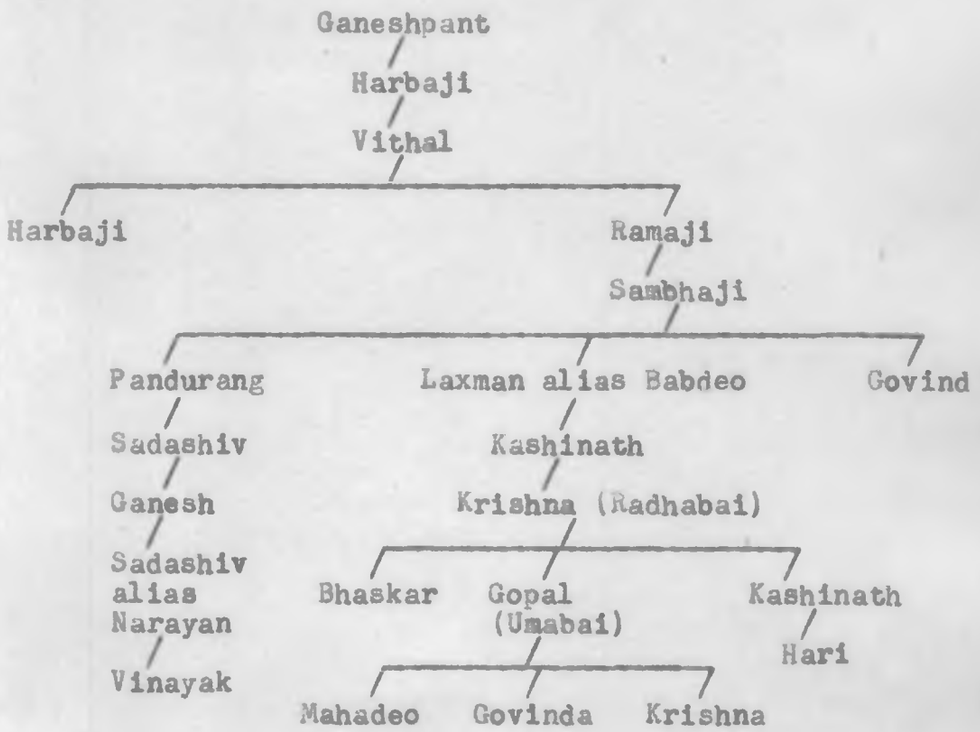
114 Bhavani Shivram Kale, a Deshastha Brahmin, was Diwan of Sabaji Bhonsale of Nagpur. After Sabaji was killed in the battle of Pachgao in 1775, he joined the services of the Nizam. After serving the Nizam for a few years, he came to Pune and entered the service of Peshwa Sawai Madhavrao. Till his death he continued his service of of the Peshwa.

115 D.C.H.C., R80: F7: L4 (App.No.42).

116 D.C.H.C., R.80: F10: L13 (App. No.44).

117 P.A.,P.S.R., R.18: B1: L9212 (App. No. 45).

APPENDIX NO. 1 - GENEALOGY OF THE KETKAR FAMILY AT MALANGGAD*



* The above Genealogy has been prepared from the unpublished Marathi papers in Modi script, which are in the possession of the Ketkar family, which resides in the village Bandhanwadi at the foot of Malanggad.

NOTES ON THE PHOTOS OF MALANGGAD

Fig. No. 1

The photo gives a view of the Pir Machi, the Darga of Haji Malang and the Panch Pir from a height of 300 ft above the Pir Machi i.e. from the Son Machi of the Malanggad fort. The white building surrounded by many other structures is the Darga. The plateau on which it stands is the Pir Machi and the fag end of the plateau which projects behind the Darga is called Panch Pir.

Fig. No. 2

The photo gives a front view of the 'gaḍad' i.e. a cave-like pit in the rock, which is exactly at the base of the Son Machi. The Son Machi is about 90 ft. above the 'gaḍad'. In this 'gaḍad' the British troops took shelter when the Maratha garrison on the Son Machi showered rockets, stones, etc. on them.

Fig. No. 3

The photo gives a view of the very small gate of the Son Machi and the supporting wall on its left side. The rock-cut steps leading to the Son Machi through the gate are also seen.

Fig. No. 4.

The photo gives a side view of the three summits of the Bale Killa (Citadel) or the Upper fort of Malanggad. This is the uppermost part of Mal'anggad, which is about 2300 ft. above the sea-level. On the plateau of this citadel the Marathas had made provision for storage of water.

Fig. No. 5

This photo gives a view of the Bale Killa or Citadel as seen from the Son Machi. The portion seen at the base of the Bale Killa is the part of the plateau of the Son Machi or the Lower fort. The entrance of one of the secret routes to the Son Machi is clearly visible in the photo (The author of this thesis is standing on one of the steps of the entrance). The photo further shows the very difficult perpendicular ascent from the Son Machi to the Bale Killa.

Fig. No. 6

In this photo the remains of the parapet wall of the Son Machi are seen. Two persons are standing on the ruined wall. The third person is standing at the centre of the Son Machi. This gives an idea of narrowness of the Son Machi.

Fig. No. 7

This photo gives a view of the 'sond' (trunk or a projected part) of the Son Machi and its lower part. The secret route through the Kushivali gate, which is mentioned in the Malanggad papers, was through the lower part of the trunk of the Son Machi.

PHOTOS OF MALANGGAD (FIGS. 1-7)



Fig. 1

A VIEW OF THE PIR MACHI FROM ABOVE



Fig. 2

FIG. 3

GATEWAY OF THE SON MACHI



Fig. 4

BALE KILLA - A SIDE VIEW



Fig. 5

ASCENT TO THE BALE KILLA



Fig. 6

REMAINS OF THE PARAPET WALL (SON MACHI)



Fig. 7

SOND (TRUNK) OF THE SON MACHI

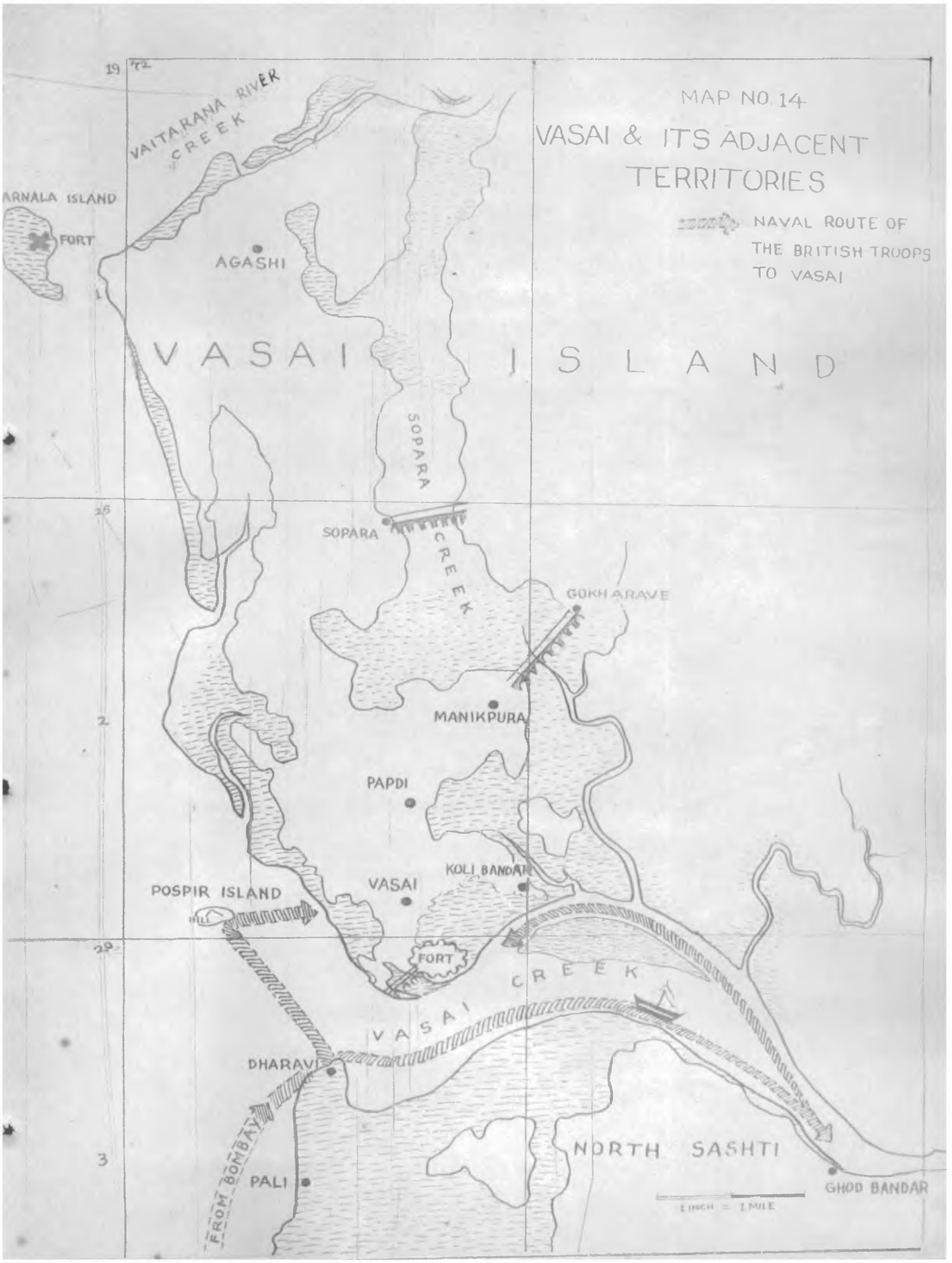


THE FIRST ANGLO-MARATHA WAR

THIRD PHASE (1779-1783) .

Chapter VI - THE SIEGE AND CAPTURE OF THE VASAI FORT (1780)

For geographical references, see Map Nos. 14 and 15 attached at the beginning of this chapter, between pp. 207C-208. Also see Map No. 12 attached at the beginning of chapter V, between pp. 154-155 and Map No. 19 attached at the beginning of Chapter VII, between pp. 251-252.


MAP NO. 14
VASAI & ITS ADJACENT TERRITORIES
NAVAL ROUTE OF THE BRITISH TROOPS TO VASAI
VAITARANA RIVER
CREEK
ARNALA ISLAND
FORT
AGASHI
VASAI ISLAND
SOPARA
SOPARA
CREEK
GOKHARAVE
MANIKPURA
PAPDI
KOLI BANDAR
VASAI
POSPIR ISLAND
FORT
CREEK
VASAI
DHARAVI
FROM BOMBAY
PALI
NORTH SASHTI
GHOD BANDAR
1 INCH = 1 MILE

MAP NO. 15

PLAN OF THE SIEGE OF THE VASAI FORT (1780)



SCALE- FOR PLAN OF THE FORT - 1 INCH = 800 FT.

SCALE = FOR SHOWING THE BRITISH POSITIONS
1 INCH = 1 MILE

CHAPTER VI

THE SIEGE AND CAPTURE OF THE VASAI FORT (1780)

The purpose of the Bombay Government in assaulting Kalyan and Malanggad was to prevent the Pune Durbar from sending supplies and succour to the fort of Vasai, which was their main target. After the Bombay troops failed against Malanggad and raised its siege in November 1780, the Bombay Council decided to concentrate their attention on the capture of the fort of Vasai. Colonel Goddard, who was at Surat when the siege of Malanggad was in progress, had promised the Bombay Council of assistance in the capture of the Vasai fort at the beginning of the year 1780. Goddard was instructed by the Bombay Council to proceed to Vasai from Surat by sea route with his army and all the military equipment. Meanwhile, Colonel Hartley removed his camp near Khopoli, assembled all his scattered troops and arrived at Kalyan, which was the depot and the base of supplies. He was to act under Goddard's command.[1]

It would be worthwhile to note the military, strategic and commercial importance of the Vasai fort and its adjacent territories to the Bombay Government. Vasai was the most coveted place for the British in the Konkan. The fort and island of Vasai came into prominence since the Portuguese inhabited that island. The Portuguese started the construction of the fort in 1590. Its parapet wall was completed after

ten years. It had ten bastions on which guns and garnāls[2] were kept. The size of the fort resembled a dacagon. From east to west its length measured nearly 3/4th mile and from north to south its breadth was nearly half a mile. The parapet walls were 30' to 35' high over the ground. The breadth of the parapet walls on the north, east and south side were not more than five feet, while on the western side facing the sea, the breadth of the parapet wall was enhanced by constructing a double wall. The ten corners of the fort had ten bastions which were named in Portuguese as (1) Nosa Sinora de Ramedio, (2) Rais Mago, (3) Saint Gonsalo, (4) Madra de diy, (5) Saint John, (6) Cavaliero, (7) Saint Sabastian, (8) Saint Paul, (9) Saint Peter, (10) Elephant.[3]

In the Marathi records, the names of some of the bastions are mentioned as (1) Bahiri Buruj, (2) Kalyan Buruj, (3) Kailas Buruj, (4) Fateh Buruj, (5) Darya Buruj[4] (Buruj facing the sea).

The citadel or the bāle killā was in the middle of the outer parapet wall. This small fort was of a square size. It had three half circular bastions on its western corner and one square bastion on its south-east corner. The fort had two main entrance gates, one was the land-gate to the west side and the other was the sea gate to the east side. Besides these two main entrance gates, there were four small secret gates. One was on the north side near the Saint Sebastion bastion. The remaining three were built in the wall which had been constructed on the sea-side.

The Vasai fort is a land-cum-marine fort. It derived its strength from sea and swamp, which have surrounded it on the north, south and east sides. It was, therefore, difficult for a besieging army to approach the fort from these three sides. It may be recalled here the difficulties and the hardships the Marathas faced in besieging the fort in 1739 under the command of Chimaji Appa. The Maratha troops under Chimaji were unable to make swift movements in the marshy and swampy ground round about the fort. It was with great difficulty that they dragged their guns near the fort and laid their mines at its base. The ramparts and bastions were too strong for the Maratha cannon-shots to make any breach.

There was only one direction in which the Vasai fort could be approached within a mile of it. The only entrance into the island itself was by means of two bridges. The one was at Sopara,[5] the other opposite to the village of Gokharave.[6] The former was at a distance of about five miles from the fort and was entirely constructed of wood. It was 96 feet long and 22 feet broad. The width of stream here at spring tides, did not exceed twenty feet in the fair season.[7]

The Vasai fort had no ditch, outworks, covert ways or glacis. It stood on the bank of and within the mouth of a deep navigable river which was formerly a naval port. From the British point of view, it was an excellent fort for building ships and was safer from the attacks of a hostile squadron, than the marine yards at Kolaba and Mazgao docks,,

where small cruisers and other vessels of small size were usually built. Between Vasai and Dharavi on the Sashti island, a distance of above 3,000 yards, big ships could move and anchor in deep water.[8]

The port of Vasai was most inaccessible and difficult to attack during the monsoon season (the site being very low and in the monsoon rather swampy). However, during that season, Bombay used to be in the greatest danger because though the Vasai port remained closed to shipping during the monsoon, its inland navigation with Bombay by the Kalyan and Thane river route was quite safe and hardly interrupted.[9] Unlike the Vasai port, therefore, Bombay was susceptible to an enemy attack during the rainy season.

The Vasai fort was a third line of defence from the British point of view. During the second and third quarters of the 18th century, the defences of Bombay were not in a strong position. A good number of British military officers had pointed out the weaknesses and loopholes in the construction of the Bombay fort as well as its defence system from time to time. The parapet walls of the Bombay fort were not high enough to give security to the fort. The number of garrisons was also inadequate. Possession of the Vasai fort would have strengthened the defence of the Bombay fort.

In the 18th century, the Bombay island was an independent island, isolated from its adjacent lands like the Sashti and Vasai islands. Under such circumstances it was easy for an enemy to apply a naval blockade to the Bombay island during

the height of the monsoon season. In case an enemy attacked the Bombay island during the height of the monsoon season, when every small water course and stream became impassible, the Bombay island was bound to fall in his hands, as the people on that island had no place to retreat. Thane was utterly useless for them as it could neither afford protection nor accommodate the garrison. Thus the only place of resort to the British under such crisis was the fort of Vasai, where they could remove their ammunition and other provisions for safety.[10]

With some improvements, Vasai was likely to be considered for naval arsenal on a small scale. It had the advantage of an inland water communication by means of Sopara creek, the Vaitarana and Tanasa rivers to the timber from the forests of the interior (Kalyan). This would considerably diminish the expenses annually incurred for the purchase and subsequent transportation of the immense quantity of timber of various kinds.

Besides great quantities of teak, black wood, eboney, etc. through extensive forests, there was in many parts of the Konkan an abundant supply of Deodar wood, which was excellent for gun-carriages.[11]

In the Vasai fort, there was an abundant supply of water, the wells being almost as numerous as the buildings. So the garrison could stay for any length of time during a siege by an enemy.

The safety and accessibility of the harbour of Bombay at

all seasons of the year, its vicinity to the Marathas, particularly to one of the passes through which the whole of the country above the ghats might be supplied with the articles of England, were the chief causes that engaged the attention of the East India Company in the acquisition of the Vasai island. Their speculations were just, as woollen and other staples of England were disposed of at Bombay to the amount of Rs. 14 lakhs annually.[12]

With the possession of Vasai, the East India Company could have a compact chain of a territory of nearly 86 miles from Surat in the north to Bombay in the south. Only two additional battalions of sepoys were sufficient to maintain the necessary posts in the extended territories, causing not much expense to the Bombay Government.[13] The British could also entirely preclude the Dutch, who had long been soliciting a settlement at Vasai, from all rivalry with the Company in the trade with the Maratha dominions, thus preventing the dangerous consequences that might attend the neighbourhood of so active and enterprising a nation.

The incessant conflict with the Marathas had plunged the Bombay Government in an acute economic crisis.[14] The Company's budgets could not be balanced as the expenses outstripped the receipts. There was a net deficit of about 50 lakh rupees. But the explorations of Goddard in Gujarat had compensated to some extent this deficit. The territories which he had acquired, were capable of yielding Rs. 30 lakhs annually. It means that the Bombay Government had to find out ways and

means to recover the remaining Rs. 20 lakhs. This deficit could be recouped by bringing Vasai Taluka under the British administration. The total annual income of Sashti (Salsette) and Vasai together would exceed Rs. 10 lakhs in case the later fell into the hands of the British.[15] This would have then fulfilled the territorial requirements of the Bombay Government.

In view of the above considerations, the Bombay Government decided to capture the fort of Vasai. In October 1780, Brigadier General Goddard and the Bombay Select Committee finalised this plan of a surprise assault on the Vasai fort. The outline of this plan was as follows: Firstly, Goddard was to proceed from Surat by sea route to Vasai and besiege the fort of Vasai. This was to be done as expeditiously and secretly as possible. Secondly, Colonel Hartley was to camp at Kalyan. His task was to guard the line of communication of the Vasai fort with Kalyan and to prevent any succour and supplies coming from Pune to Vasai. Thirdly, after the capture of the Vasai fort and its adjacent territories, the British armies were to attack the other nearby forts like Arnala, Kohaj and conquer the territory between the Borghat and Vasai. If these British military tactics had succeeded, the entire region between Bombay and Borghat would have come under their control, which could have enabled the British forces to sweep down the Borghat at any time and bring pressure on the Maratha capital of Pune itself.

While the British were thus engaged in planning an offensive, the Marathas did not remain quite. They were preparing for another round of battle with the British. As far back as September 1780, the Marathas had suspected that the British would treacherously attack the Vasai fort in the rainy season of that year.[15-a] Visaji Keshav Lele[16] was then the commandant of the fort. Nana Phadnis was all the time instructing him to be on his guard, lest the British would surprise him. As a measure of precaution, Visaji Keshav improved upon and strengthened some parts of the fortifications of the fort.

Before setting out for an assault on the Vasai fort, the Bombay Government sent a Shenavi[17] to reconnoitre the different parts of the fort. The Shenavi went to Vasai and surveyed the fort. He observed that the place of arsenal was without any protection or cover. He also surveyed other parts of the fort and supplied the necessary information to the Bombay Government. Relying on his information, the Bombay Council decided to attack and set fire to the arsenal.

Visaji Keshav, the commandant of the fort, received information about the movements of the Shenavi through his spies, which he reported to Nana Phadnis in one of his letters.[18] Visaji Keshav immediately took measures for the protection of the fort. He built a new place for the arsenal, which was strong and where the fire from artillery could not reach. He stored his ammunition at different places in order to prevent any explosion from the enemy fire. The new place

of arsenal was near the temple of Sampak, which was strengthened by means of wooden covers.[19]

There were rumours in the Maratha camp in September, 1780 that Goddard had come to Bombay and that he was soon going to besiege the Vasai fort.[20] Visaji Keshav informed Nana that nearly three thousand gardis had collected near Malanggad and that for the protection of dādar (a bridge near Vasai), the Pune Court should send expeditiously a renowned Maratha officer.[21]

The preparation of the British plan of assault on the Vasai fort started in the first week of October, 1780. William Hornby, the Governor of Bombay, came in person to Dharavi.[22] At this crucial period, the garrison in the Vasai fort was suffering from acute shortage of grains and money. They were subsisting only on rice.[23]

In the month of October 1780, twenty small ships loaded with equipment for erecting batteries against the Vasai fort came to Ghod Bandar.[24] Similarly, some ships from Bombay also reached in the vicinity of the fort. A small party of British soldiers tried to storm the fort and opened fire against it. Some of the Maratha garrison made a sortie in reply, and repulsed the attack. It was just a minor skirmish between the advanced parties of the British and some of the Maratha troops, in which three British ships were damaged by the fire from inside the fort.[25]

By the end of October, 1780, the activities of the attacking British parties were intensified. The British troops

assembled to the south of Dharavi.[26] On the 30th October, they encamped under the cover of a hill named Pospir.[27] In the meantime, Anandrao Raste,[28] who was sent by Nana Phadnis, reached at Gokharave, a village about five miles to the N.E. of Vasai. Besides, the Maratha contingents under Chimapa Panase,[29] Bhavani Shivram and Monsieur Noronha alias Musa Narang started their march from Pune. On the 23rd, these contingents reached Talegao, a village which is about 20 miles to the N.W. of Pune. They were to advance towards Vasai via Borghat.[30]

In the first week of November, 1780, the British erected their batteries on the hill of Pospir and fired some shots at the fort. Goddard with his army was still on his way from Surat to Vasai. The soldiers of Raste who duly arrived at the village of Gokharave, did not dare to enter the bridge (dādar) near Gokharave. The Maratha soldiers at this juncture clamoured for supplies of foodgrains. Visaji Keshav Lele has written in one of his letters: "All the local peasants and people evacuated their villages. There were two mahals in the vicinity of the bridge near Gokharave. The horsemen belonging to Raste's unit entered them and looted everything. They did not spare even women and children from beating. The local population, out of fear, deserted the two mahals. Such were the misdeeds of the horsemen (of Raste). ..... These horsemen are looting within an area of fifty miles. The Brahmins have taken shelter in forests. The horsemen have pursued them there and cut off the noses of the Brahmin

women and have beaten the Brahmins."[31] This is the comment of a Maratha commander on his own troops, which reveals the pitiable condition of the poor local people and peasants due to the harassment of the Maratha soldiers.

The above remarks give a glimpse of the camp life of the Marathas. The Maratha commissariat department was always defective. In fact, there was no separate commissariat department as such in the Maratha camp to make equal distribution of foodgrains, fodder and other stores to different units of the army. This led the Maratha forces to looting and ravaging, which the Maratha officers and commanders could not prevent. Throughout the period of the first Anglo-Maratha War, we find the Maratha soldiers indulging in looting, which earned them a bad name.

One of the basic principles of war is to win over the sympathy of the local people. If an army cares to win the sympathy of the people who live in the territories round about a battlefield, they help the army in every way. As the local people are well acquainted with the geography of the region in which they live, they can guide the army in its movements. They can supply information about the local places, and their distances, can provide the necessities of life to the soldiers and can even act as spies by entering into the enemy's camp. In short, for a good camp life, it is necessary to have the support of the local people. This principle was neglected by the Marathas. But the British could not afford to do so. They utilized the services of the local people during

the course of the first Anglo-Maratha War.

In the first week of November, the troops under Ramchandra Ganesh Kanade, Monsieur Noronha and others advanced to the vicinity of the Borghat. By this time, the first batch of the Bombay troops had encamped on a hill of Pospir. In the second week of November, 150 ships loaded with soldiers, reached this theatre of war. The people of Bombay, out of curiosity went to the shore of Sashti (Salsette) to see what was going to happen. Visaji Keshav Lele writes that the people thronged like the pilgrims at Pandharpur. Even the British women of Bombay enthusiastically accompanied their relatives.[32]

By this time, Goddard's troops had arrived within ten miles of Tarapur. Goddard had discarded the original idea of travelling by sea-route because he had a large number of troops and heavy equipment. The Marathas estimated Goddard's troops as comprising seven to eight thousand Gardis, one thousand cavalry, three thousand labourers and two hundred and fifty small pieces of artillery and guns. Goddard's army could proceed to Vasai either via Kohaj or Ketakkhedi.[33]

Before Goddard left Surat, he stationed two Bengal battalions there to provide for the safety of the territories lying between the rivers Narmada and Mahi and the towns of Dabhai and Badoda.[34] It also appeared to him absolutely necessary that a body of troops be formed to the south of Surat to oppose the incursions of the Maratha cavalry and be ready to move on the earliest information of their approach to the

vicinity of Surat. Therefore, Goddard applied to the chiefs of Bhadoch and Surat to send a battalion each from their garrisons. The particular object of these operations was the protection of the paraganas dependent on Surat. In order that both the battalions should act in concert for the better prosecution of the general plan of defence, Goddard appointed Major Forbes,[35] a man of ability and experience to the command of the whole army. Forbes was further authorised to order the force stationed at Ahmedabad to join him, should he find it absolutely necessary.[36] The whole plan shows how a good general takes care not to expose his rear to the onslaught of an enemy while moving forward.

Goddard started his march on the 16th October as per schedule. His troops, however, had to undergo fatigue and hardships due to the extremely bad condition of road intercepted by numerous streams and rivers, which could be crossed with great difficulty. Besides, Goddard was compelled to march considerably inland in order to avoid the deep inlets of the sea, which could be only crossed in boats. The route lay through and over hills where the roads were exceedingly narrow and steep and in some places stopped up with large stones and trees laid across.[37]

The additional distance, caused by the circuitous route and the time required to remove the above obstructions rendered the march of Goddard's army tedious and he did not reach to the bridge of Gokharave that joined the island of Vasai to the continent till the 12th November. Goddard understood

from his spies that the bridge was in a good condition. He, therefore, immediately decided to take possession of it before the enemy could think and had time for its destruction. Accordingly, he marched himself in the morning of the 12th with the Grenadier of the army. A small guard of the Marathas had been posted at the bridge, which fled on the first appearance of the British troops. Next day, Goddard marched and occupied the ground, and encamped near the sea shore within a little more than two miles of the walls of the Vasai fort.

The Marathas, it seems, committed a few mistakes in maintaining the defence line of the Vasai fort. Firstly, they should have kept a very strong guard at the bridge of Gokharave which was one of the two land route entrances to Vasai from its north. Secondly, in case the enemy overpowered or outnumbered the guards at Gokharave, the Marathas should have destroyed the bridge. This would have prevented, at least made difficult the junction of the Bombay and Surat armies. Thirdly, the Maratha navy remained inactive. It did not even attempt to intercept the Bombay troops which were pouring from the shore of Sashti (Salsette) island into the seabelt of the island and Vasai.

The camp of Goddard was inside the bridge of Vasai. The camping site was known as Bajipura, where a temple of the Goddess Anandi Bhavani was situated. The Bombay troops joined Goddard at this place.[38] Even to-day Bajipura is a part of

the Vasai town, which is situated at a distance of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ to two miles to the N.W. of the Vasai fort. As a precautionary measure, Visaji Keshav Lele the commandant of the Vasai fort, closed all the gates of the fort. His gunners fired some shots at the British troops stationed at Bajipura and Papadi.[39] Visaji got the news that Nana Phadnis had sent money to be distributed among the Gardis and that it had reached the Mahuli fort (Thane district). Visaji sent some clerks and men to bring the money to Vasai. In the meantime, the enemy completely encircled the fort. Visaji apprehended the possibility of the Gardis creating trouble, if they were not paid in time.[40]

Next day Goddard got his forces and a great part of material landed at Bajipura. Goddard was happy with the alacrity and spirit shown by the troops since they left Surat and the exertions made in every department since his arrival near Vasai.

The time required for landing and collecting the stores gave Goddard sufficient leisure to inform himself fully of the strength of the Vasai fort before he could commence the assault. He examined the fort minutely, especially the natural situation of the ground, the construction of the fort and the number of cannon planted on the walls. According to his estimate, the garrison of the fort was exceeding 8,000 strong men. This number created the impression of the enemy being much more strong and formidable than the description which had been given to him before. Goddard accordingly, determined

to carry on his operations with utmost skill and precaution. This would have prolonged the capture of the fort, but would not fail in securing the ultimate success. It would have also prevented the unnecessary sacrifice of the troops. Goddard had originally thought that he should erect his breaching batteries on the north east side of the fort, because the works there were far inferior to those on the north side. But after minutely examining the ground at high spring tides, he found that the north east side was entirely overflowed with water and that it would be impracticable to carry on his approaches on that side. Goddard therefore, laid aside his first design [illegible] and decided to make a grand assault at the north side, which, though rendered exceedingly strong by art, had not the same difficulties to oppose his operations.

On the 28th November in the morning, Goddard had completed a battery of two 18 and four 12 pounders, with a battery of six 13 inch mortars, within 900 yards of the wall. After this battery was fired, it was difficult for him to ascertain the damage of the Marathas, but he had every reason to hope that it had been considerable. The artillery had been extremely well directed and most of the shells thrown into the fort had appeared to do the desired execution. At all events the effect it had produced had been very favourable to the British operations. It enabled Goddard to carry on his works under cover of its fire to the spot, where he proposed to erect the grand battery. After the necessary approaches were completed, he intended to operate that battery

in the night of the 28th November.[41]

The Marathas were also active counteracting the British artillery fire. They made a grand plan to silence the British guns and batteries. The guns planted on the Bahiri and Kalyan Buruj were to hit at the English battery at Pali.[42] The guns planted on the Kailas Buruj were to direct fire at the English battery at Bajipura. The enemy battery erected at the Koli Bandar was to be silenced by guns mounted on the Fateh and Darya Buruj. On the sea-side there were many small ships. No guns were directed to the fort from that side.[43]

The Marathas did not even once venture to sally from the walls or interrupt the British operations except by a hot fire of artillery. This fire, owing to the skill of the engineer in constructing the works, though served remarkably well, did very little execution in the British ranks. They also hurled some shells and rockets but without effect. This demonstrates the inferiority of the Maratha artillery to that of the British and their poor marksmanship. These were the two major weaknesses of the Marathas, which ultimately led to the surrender of the Vasai fort to the British.

Goddard completed a third battery of four 18 pounders within 18 yards of the fort wall and more to the eastward. This battery was expected to infilade the face of the fort, where Goddard was carrying on the grand attack, and greatly divert the attention of the besieged, and destroy the works

which flanked and commanded the entrance of the breach.

At this time advices reached from Hartley that in consequence of a large body of the Marathas having descended the Ghats, he had thought it advisable to move towards Kalyan with his detachment in order to maintain the line of communication with that place, where his magazines of provision and ammunition were ledged, Goddard, in reply, sent Hartley such instructions which appeared to him most effective to defeat the success of the enemy's designs and guard against any attempt they might make to relieve Vasai. He, however, thought that the Marathas would not venture to put themselves between the two fires of his army and Hartley's contingent, which situation the British wanted to bring about. Goddard also thought that it would not be possible for the Marathas to throw succours into Vasai, because the place was so closely invested that they would not be able to approach it. While entering Vasai, Goddard had destroyed two of the bridges upon the creek, one at Sopara and the other at Gokharave, that joined the island of Vasai to the main land and had posted a very strong guard for the defence of the remaining one near Vasai.[44] He was also sure that the Maratha navy would not venture to come within the firing range of the British navy. Thus he had sealed the fate of the Vasai fort completely.

A few Maratha horsemen under Anandrao Raste made their appearance at the beginning of December on the outskirts of

the creek and burnt some of the adjacent villages. Goddard's spies brought him intelligence that nearly 1000 horse of the enemy were encamped at a distance of about thirty miles from the bridge and that parties were detached from them to destroy the country. The Marathas adopted these usual tactics to cut off the supplies of the besieging forces, as neither their guns in the fort could fire effectively nor their army outside the fort dared to assault the British in the face of their powerful artillery.

On the 9th and 10th December, Goddard's men opened a battery of nine 24 pounders within 500 yards of the wall against the bastion on the north west side of the fort. This part of the fort, though built of exceedingly large and hard stones, put together by strong lime-work, was greatly damaged by the fire of artillery. It showed the possibility of a breach.

Previous to completing the grand battery, Goddard had erected a battery of 20 mortars of different sizes. This battery fired into the fort with a great success and on the evening of the 7th set fire to a magazine of one of the bastions to the right of the one which had shown the prospects of a breach. The magazine blew up with a very loud explosion and seemed to have destroyed a considerable quantity of powder, shells, etc.[45]

The constant fire that was kept up from the two gun batteries took such a heavy toll of the defences and dismayed

the Marathas so effectively that they scarcely ventured to fire from the guns inside the fort which still remained undamaged. Such undamaged guns were only two or three in number. They were protected from the British fire, as they were kept in the interior flanks of the bastions. When the Marathas fired them, they were fired in haste and at random. So they were ineffective to inflict any damage on the British forces. Only Lieutenant John Goddard was wounded in his legs by a cannon ball. However, the surgeons opined that the injury was not fatal.

On the 10th December, about 200 Maratha horse stationed at Gokharave, came within a mile of the Vasai bridge. Goddard had earlier found that about two miles to the north towards Arnala, there was a space to the extent of a mile at low water which was perfectly fordable and in some place uncovered by any water. Goddard posted a strong party consisting of the whole cavalry, two companies of sepoys and two six pounders, to prevent the Marathas reaching to that spot.[46]

The incessant fire without intermission of the English batteries on the 9th and the 10th December so much intimidated the Maratha garrison that at 10 o'clock in the morning of the 11th December, a messenger came from the Vasai fort offering the surrender of the garrison. Goddard gave time to the garrison till the sunrise, dismissed the messenger, declaring, if the terms he granted were not complied with by that time, he would resume hostilities. At 7 in the

morning of the 12th, as no messenger appeared, he ordered several batteries to play and kept on firing both from the guns and mortars for about half an hour, which had the desired effect. The messenger came out again, upon which Goddard ordered the firing to cease at about 9 o'clock. Nago Pant, one of the principal Maratha sardars, the former messenger and another Brahmin from Visaji Pant Lele, the Subhadar of the place, formally waited on Goddard. The principal conditions upon which Goddard agreed to accept the proposed surrender, were that the garrison should march out and lay down their arms in front of the fort, after which they would be permitted to go in safety to whatever place they desired; that they should be allowed to carry away their own private property, but that all public property should be faithfully delivered to the victors. As a preliminary article, Goddard insisted that Jacob Johnson, a private man of the Madras Regiment of Europeans, who had deserted the British side during the siege while he was on duty, should be handed over to him. With this final answer, Goddard dismissed the emissaries and allowed them time till 1 o'clock, by which time, should they not comply, he would hoist a flag in the battery as a signal for the renewal of hostilities. When the stipulated time was over, the flag was accordingly hoisted and very soon after, the people from the fort made their appearance from the eastern side coming out of the water gateway. At the front was the European, bound and escorted by a small

guard. He was delivered to Goddard. Next followed the unarmed inhabitants, all of whom belonged to the town of Bahadarpura, Papadi and other villages, adjacent to Vasai. Finally came Visaji Pant Lele and other sardars with the garrison, consisting of 4,000 men, among whom were about 1,000 Arabs. They laid down their arms and delivered their standards, about 30 in number. All of them were immediately escorted by a company of sepoys out of the island. Visaji Pant and the other sardars had the choice given to them of being sent to Bombay or Surat and continuing under the English protection or go back to the Peshwa.[47] They all preferred to go back to the Maratha camp.

After the fort of Vasai surrendered, Visajipant Lele, the commandant of the Vasai fort, arrived in the camp of Bajipant Anna Joshi at Vajreshwari on the 12th December with Raghopant Godbole and Bapuji Shinde.[48]

This reveals three things. Firstly, the British were so successful in isolating the fort that the garrison and the Marathas outside could not maintain any communication with each other. Secondly, the Maratha forces, which came to the rescue of the garrison were not able to boost the morale of the garrison of the Vasai fort, because they themselves had lost their own. The Maratha officers do not seem to have a wider plan of attack and defence. They lacked imagination or resourcefulness to devise means and ways to combat the British artillery fire. They could have resorted to raids and sorties in the darkness of nights to capture the British

guns. No doubt, in such attempts their loss would have been considerable. But in that case they would have the chance to score triumph over the British troops. The spirit and daring of Shivaji's Mavales and Hetkaris was no longer visible among the Marathas of the late 18th century.

After the surrender of the Vasai fort, Goddard was not able to ascertain the number of the Marathas killed and wounded during the siege, but from the effect of the shots and shells that appeared in every part of the fort, and the number of wounded they carried with them, it was believed that the loss on the Maratha side was considerable. On the other hand, the British captured the fort with a negligible loss on their side, one officer only having been wounded and about 12 men killed and wounded during the siege, including 4 Europeans and one Subhedar of sepoys.[49] It was due to the able management and skill of Captain Theobald, the Engineer, to whom the construction work had been entrusted, that many lives were saved. The brisk and well directed fire of the British guns and the effective bursting of the shells, not only drove the Marathas from their firing places (jangyās), but also destroyed two of the magazines in the fort, which was the crowning point of success of the British operations. Lieutenant Colonel Baile, Commandant of artillery, supported by Major Mackay, ably directed the artillery department during the siege.

After the siege was over, Goddard examined the fortifications of the Vasai fort minutely and found that the idea

he had formed of it being accessible on the side where he attacked it, to have been perfectly just, the works there being much weakened. On every other side the fort was surrounded by water or low marshy ground. Goddard took every measure to encourage the inhabitants, who had deserted the fort on the commencement of hostilities, to return and settle in their habitations.

On the 12th December, Goddard heard that Lieutenant Colonel Hartley arrived in the neighbourhood of Vajreshwari,[50] that a body of the Marathas had followed him from the southern side, while Monsieur Noronha, with his contingent, was on the road between Hartley and Goddard's camp. Goddard decided to march in the evening of the 12th December with the Grenadiers of the army to intercept the Maratha troops and facilitate Colonel Hartley's juncture with him. It is necessary here to take a review of the movements of Hartley's detachment and its encounter with the Marathas.

During the siege of Malanggad, Hartley had hotly pursued the Marathas upto the foot of the Borghat. By the middle of November, 1780, his headquarters were at Man. Here he received news that Nana Phadnis and Haripant Phadke had stationed at Talegao with a large force and that in order to cut off his communication with Kalyan in the rear, Nana had sent troops under his eminent commanders. On the receipt of this news Hartley decided to fall back on Kalyan.

Hartley was informed by the Bombay Council of their

plan in concert with Goddard to seize the fort of Vasai and if possible the fort of Arnala,[51] before any succours received from Pune. Accordingly, Hartley chalked out his plans of manoeuvre. Firstly, he was to establish his main camp at Kalyan. Secondly, he was to station his army as a wedge between the Vasai fort and the Maratha forces advancing from the Borghat and not allow any succour and supplies to reach the Vasai fort. If the whole Maratha army or a part of it tried to by-pass him, he was to pursue it or wait for General Goddard's orders to take necessary action. If due to force of circumstances, he had to proceed to the rescue of the besieging troops at Vasai, he was to take care that his rear was not exposed to the Maratha cavalry charges. He also thought of posting strong guard at Kalyan and at other different centres with a view to protecting Kalyan, the important place which blocked the Maratha route to Vasai and protecting the peasants and inhabitants from the raids of the Maratha roving bands.[52]

Hartley started his march from Man[53] to Kalyan in the morning of the 22nd November. At noon he encamped about 4 miles to the northward of the ground at Devalali.[54] A few Maratha roving bands appeared on his rear. The officer in command of Kalyan informed him that the Maratha horsemen were in the neighbourhood of Kalyan and that a body of thousand men marched from the Mahuli fort and burnt Bhivandi, Nangoli and Sanola villages.[55] On the 23rd, Hartley

advanced at 6 o'clock in the morning. For above ten miles the Marathas made repeated attacks on his rear guard, but without making the smallest impression on it. One havaldar, one naik and twelve sepoys were wounded, but only three of them were serious. On the 23rd, Hartley encamped about two miles to the southward of Badlapur. Here the different scattered units under his command joined him.[56]

By the middle of November, the forces under Ramchandra Ganesh Kanade, Monsieur Naronha, Bhavani Shivram, Vishwasrao alias Chimapa Panase and Bajipant Anna Joshi were on their way to Vasai. The general military plan of Nana Phadnis to be followed by these commanders was as follows: The Maratha commanders were to attack Hartley's forces at Kalyan. The task of rescuing Vasai, which was closely invested by the British, was assigned to Ramchandra Ganesh and Bajipant Anna, who were instructed to rush to Vasai without wasting their time in engaging Hartley. They were asked not to linger at Kalyan but to proceed straight to Vasai. Bhavani Shivram and Vishwasrao Yeshwant were to remain in the vicinity of Kalyan to watch the movements of Hartley and not to allow him to pursue Ramchandra Ganesh or reinforce the besieging troops at Vasai.[57] The forces under Haripant Phadke, Raste, Pratinidhi, etc. were to follow the advancing units of the Maratha troops and they were to be directed whenever their need arose.

After Hartley left Madh,[58] Bhavani Shivram and Vishwasrao

Yashwant followed him. They pursued by the route of Dahivali and Karjat. One or two days after Hartley encamped at Badalapur ~~Belapur~~, Bhavani Shivram and Yashwantrao Panase halted in the vicinity of Neral. In the meanwhile, Ramchandra Ganesh, who had marched from Pune, crossed the Borghat and encamped at Khopoli on the 25th November. On the 27th he joined Bhavani Shivram and Vishwasrao Yashwant at Neral. Bajipant Joshi and Chimapa Panase also arrived at the same place.[60]

All these Maratha commanders assembled together and evolved a plan to route Hartley. They decided to divide their forces into two divisions. Bhavani Shivram and Vishwasrao Yashwant were to remain at Neral and attack Hartley's front. Ramchandra Ganesh and Bajipant were to advance to Badalapur and storm his rear. Thus the Marathas decided to sandwitch the British forces at Badalapur between frontal and rear attacks.

However, the ground occupied by Hartley was very secure. On the two sides of the ground there was a natural trench formed by a river-bed and streams. Besides, it was a place of dense forests, where the British army had a natural cover and protection.[61] The undulating ground made the Maratha cavalry ineffective and the expected assistance of the artillery under Monsieur Noronha did not reach in time. Initially, the Marathas had planned rear and frontal attacks against the enemy, but in the course of time they had to give up the rear attack, as the route to reach in the rear of the enemy was very cumbersome and even if they had reached the spot, the

distance between the two forces would be nearly 8 miles, which was too much for an effective assault. Under such circumstances, they had to rely only on the frontal attack. When that attack was executed, there was an exchange of fire between the two sides which went on for nearly ten hours. Inspite of all their exertions, the Marathas failed to dislodge Hartley from his position. They had to suffer a loss of twenty men and twelve horses, killed and wounded.[62]

Hartley, like a good commander, was successful in creating confusion in the Maratha camp. The Marathas could not guess whether the enemy was to fall back on Kalyan or whether he wanted to give time to Goddard engaged at Vasai, by diverting the Maratha attention to his forces.[63] Nana Phadnis expected Ramchandra Ganesh not to waste his time at Badalapur. He urged Ramchandra Ganesh constantly to proceed straight to Vasai immediately, because relief of Vasai, more than anything else, was the task of primary importance. Instead of advancing forward as per the instructions, the seasoned commander like Ramchandra Ganesh wasted valuable time in expressing lame excuses to Nana Phadnis. In a letter to Nana he complained that he had only three thousand soldiers, which were inadequate to encounter the British, that the British had closed all approaches to Vasai from Papadi to Mandavi, that at least ten thousand troops were necessary to go to the rescue of the Vasai fort, that after the arrival of the forces of Raste, Pratinidhi, Noronha and Khanderao Trimbak, etc., he would march forward.[64] It was pity that

an experienced commander like Ramchandra Ganesh failed to understand the gravity and urgency of the situation. Firstly, the condition of the Vasai fort demanded his immediate presence there and secondly, if he had advanced in right earnest, there was very likelihood of Hartley coming out of his secure position at Badalapur. In that case the Marathas would have attacked him either on the flanks or in the rear and front. Ramchandra Ganesh wasted his time at Badalapur till the 2nd December.[65]

One of the major defects of the Maratha army in the later half of the 18th century seems to be its immobility. In the preceding years, history tells us about many gallant efforts of Shivaji, Santaji Ghorpade, Dhanaji Jadhav and Bajirao I against the most formidable enemies. Shivaji's movements were so swift that the British could not resist the temptation of comparing them with the lightning. Bajirao I, a born cavalry-leader, also could overcome his enemies because of his mobile army units. This rapidity of the Maratha movements, which struck terror in the hearts of their enemies, disappeared after the death of Madhavrao I. During the siege under study, the armies of Raste, Pratinidhi and Noronha took more than twenty days to reach Badalapur from Pune! The Maratha spies had given the news of a possible siege of Vasai by the British in September 1780 and the Maratha reinforcements reached the vicinity of Vasai by the 10th December 1780!

On the 6th December 1780, some Maratha units shelled

Hartley's camp at Badalapur with two guns for about 4 hours. But only two of their shots did the desired execution. The British lost one sergeant and one matross of the artillery and one sepoy sergeant and one sepoy. One sepoy was also wounded by Maratha musketry fire. Both the Maratha cavalry and infantry stood at a great distance at the time of the attack.[66] On the 5th December, Hartley had intelligence that a party of the Maratha horse had marched from Damat[67] and encamped about 8 miles to the northward of Badalapur on the Vasai road and that that party was on the same evening reinforced by Monsieur Noronha with three guns and one thousand foot and that Noronha and Raste had received orders from Nana to proceed with that force towards Vasai.[68]

If Nana had placed all his units under one Commander-in-Chief, the resulting unity of command would have brought the desired effect. As the situation was, his every commander was acting as a Commander-in-Chief and would wait for his advice if any difficulty cropped up. This was another good example of the inability of the feudal army of the Marathas to act in cohesion and unity.

Hartley's intelligence was true. Ramchandra Ganesh had marched from Badalapur[69] towards Vasai on the 3rd December.[70] On the 5th December he halted at a village called Padaghe[71] and on the 7th he was at Vajreshwari.[72] Here Raste and Noronha joined him.

When Hartley received reports of Ramchandra Ganesh's advance, he immediately left Badalapur and encamped between

Kambe and Titwala.[73] Before proceeding towards Vasai, he did not fail, like a good military officer, to guard his rear fully against the possible Maratha raid. He left some troops to guard Kalyan. But thinking them to be inadequate, he requested for reinforcements from Bombay.[74]

As soon as Hartley left the camp at Badalapur, the Marathas adopted their usual guerilla tactics. Vishwasrao Yashwant and Bhavani Shivram made assaults on his rear. The Gardis fired cannon balls and hurled rockets.[75] When Hartley's forces were marching between the villages of Kambe and Titwala, the Maratha cavalry, headed by Jano Trimbak, attacked their rear guard and looted some guns and bullocks. They also killed some sepoys and captured two.[76]

Two Marathi letters of this period throw a good light on the Maratha camp life. One letter describes Ramchandra Ganesh's camp and the other that of Vishwasrao Yashwant and Bhavani Shivram. Ramchandra Ganesh, in his letter to Nana Phadnis, remarks, "I have not the required number of cannon. The ammunition and fireballs are also in a small quantity. Some of my troops have not received their daily wages for one and half month, while the others have not received their salaries for fifteen days. I am involved in financial difficulties. I have no money even to offer to the wounded. There is no trace of a trader in the adjacent areas. All (camp-dwellers) loot and ravage the territory. They do not observe discipline."[77] The remarks of Vishwasrao Yashwant and Bhavani Shivaram in this respect are also interesting. They

have written to Nana, "You had sent some money for the expenses of the army. Out of ~~them~~ it, six to seven thousand rupees were spent on the wounded and killed. We pulled on by giving some part of the money to the Gardis and the army. We have to employ the services of our men every day and we have no money to pay them....Every footman got only a rupee or one and half rupee each. How will he be able to subsist on such meagre wages? He has to go forward 10 miles, give fight to the enemy and then return 10 miles back to his camp daily."[78]

On the 9th December, Ramchandra Ganesh and Bajipant Anna marched from Vajreshwari and arrived at Adane Bhatane[79] near Mandavi. From there, they went to Gokharave and then near the bridge of Vasai. From a short distance they saw the preparations made by Goddard against the Vasai fort and again came back to Adane Bhatane and encamped there.

On the 9th Hartley marched from Titwala at night towards Vasai. The Marathas were alert. The different units under Janoji Trimbak, Chaskar, Khandoji Jagtap, Trimbakrao Hajari, Accharam Hajari, etc. showered rockets upon the British forces. They captured some guns. When Hartley halted, the Marathas stopped at a distance of six miles and began reconoissance movements. On the 10th December 1780, Hartley marched forward. The Marathas pursued him. They divided themselves into two parts. The units under Jano Trimbak and others attacked the left flank, while Bhavani Shivaram and Vishwasrao Yashwant attacked the right one. They showered

cannon shots, muskets, arrows, to which the British exchanged matchlock and flintlock fire effectively. The fighting covered an area of five to six miles. Balajipant Phatak, and Kashipant on the Maratha side fought very bravely. The fight took place at a very close range. Some horses and horsemen were killed on the Maratha side. On the British side, three eminent officers were killed. They were carried in a palanquin. The Marathas burnt many of the enemy carriages. They also carried good spoils of war to their camp at Titwala. This action was fought at a village called Padaghe, nearly 10 miles to the N.E. of Bhivandi.[80]

On the 10th December 1780, Hartley left his camp at Padaghe and established his next camp at Dugad, about 4 miles to the south of Vajreshwari, to which place he ~~proposed~~ reached ~~marching~~ next day. When Hartley arrived at Dugad, Ramchandra Ganesh and Bajipant Joshi, who were at Adane Bhatane, found themselves between Vasai and Dugad. Thinking that they might be sandwitched between the two forces of Goddard and Hartley, they retired back to Dugad. The forces under Bhavani Shivram and Chimapa Panase had also encamped at Dugad in their attempt to pursue Hartley. The Marathas decided that Chimapa Panase and Bhavani Shivaram should attack the front, while Ramchandra Ganesh and Bajipant Anna should fall upon the rear of Hartley's troops. The region round about Dugad was hilly and bumpy. Therefore, the Marathas erected a wooden platform and using it as a cover fired at the front and rear of Hartley's detachment. Thereupon Hartley mounted some of

his guns on a high hill and bombarded the Marathas and their wooden platform. Due to accurate shooting of the British gunners, the wooden structure collapsed. In this engagement a number of Maratha footmen and horsemen were killed and wounded. In this skirmish Raste's men distinguished themselves. Unfortunately for the Marathas, their experienced and able commander, Ramchandra Ganesh Kanade received a fatal wound in the stomach from a musket shot on the 10th December[81] and he died of it on the next day. Riyasatkar Sardesai's statement that Ramchandra Ganesh was killed in the battle of Vajreshwari, which took place the next day,[82] is wrong. The British loss at Dugad was one hundred men killed and wounded. Lieutenants Cowan and Pierson each lost a leg by cannon shots.[83]

On the 11th December, Hartley marched to Vajreshwari. The temple of Goddess Vajreshwari is surrounded on all sides by hills. Hartley kept his base between the middle portion of two hills. These two hills gave him protection and security on his two flanks. On the 11th, Hartley had to fight against the united forces of the Marathas, numbering about 20,000, throughout the day. The Marathas attacked his front and rear. In that attack 16 sepoys ~~and~~ on the British side were killed and eighty wounded.

The Marathas then brought a great pressure on the two parties which Hartley had posted on eminences or small hillocks on each flank of the line. During the last night, he had ordered his engineer to establish two posts there. To each

of these two posts he drew up a pounder. The Marathas, in the morning of the 12th, opened the attack first. Due to a cloud of thick fog, Hartley's men could not see them till past 9 o'clock. When all of a sudden the fog disappeared, the British forces discovered a large body of Maratha horse closing to the right of their line. The Maratha infantry under Monsieur Noronha endeavoured to gain the height on the right flank, but this infantry and the horsemen were thrown into such a confusion by the gun posted there and the artillery pieces to the right of the line that they instantly retreated along the Mahuli road. The other body of the Marathas encamped about eight miles from Vajreshwari on the Vasai road. In the battle of Vajreshwari, one havaldar and one sepoy were killed on the British side. Lieutenant Cowan, Hartley's aid-de-camp and Lieutenant Cooper, both died of wounds they had received.[84] One of the noteworthy features of the actions fought at Dagad and Vajreshwari was the bravery and courage displayed by Bajipant Anna and Anandrao Raste.[85] Monsieur Noronha was wounded in the arm by a bullet. However, his infantry did a satisfactory job. Tuko Anandrao, Ramchandra Gopal Laturkar and many others on the Maratha side were wounded. Though the Marathas received these setbacks, they were undaunted. They were on the point of erecting another wooden structure in place of the old one destroyed by the British, when they received the news of the fall of the Vasai fort on the 11th. Soon Visajipant Lele, Raghopant Godbole and Bapuji Shinde came from Vasai and joined the Vajreshwari camp. The

Marathas, apprehending that Goddard, who was now free due to the fall of the Vasai fort, would attack them in the rear and they would be caught between the two armies, shifted their camp to the east of the Vajreshwari hot water springs.[86]

The news of Hartley's difficulties reached Goddard on the 12th. He at once planned to march for his rescue. He thought that his sudden movement might surprise and create panic in the Maratha camp. On the 13th December, Goddard reached Mandavi[87] and arrived at Vajreshwari on the 16th. When the van of his contingent passed through the village, he could see the lights of the Maratha camp and also hear the sound of their trumpets as if they were in motion (at a distance of three miles). Soon he was disappointed to hear the news that the Marathas had gone far beyond his reach. Either alarmed by the fall of Vasai or apprised of the motion, Goddard made, the Marathas had sent off their bazaars, baggage, sick and wounded men towards Mahuli and had followed with the whole of their force. They stationed only a party of horse as a guard at their former camp, which was the body Goddard saw in motion after his arrival at Vajreshwari. Soon Goddard joined Hartley, who was strongly encamped in a post he had judiciously chosen.[88]

The Marathas at this juncture encamped within five to six miles of the fort of Mahuli.[89] As Goddard's forces were fatigued with their recent harassing march, he decided to make a halt near Dugad. Goddard had sent a messenger to the Arnala fort summoning the garrison to surrender. The

custodian of the fort refused to surrender and indicated his resolution to hold the fort till his last.

The fort of Arnala, is 10 miles to the north of Vasai, situated at the north west angle almost close to the water's edge of a small island of the same name. It commanded the southern and main entrance into the Dantur or Vaitarana river. The fort was an oblong square of about 700 feet with circular towers for its defences. The general height of the construction including the parapet was about 30 feet without ditch or work of any kind. The body of the rampart throughout was of solid masonry but the parapet was of inferior dimensions. In point of extent and strength, of the forts upon the sea-coast, Arnala ranked next to that of Vasai.[90]

Arnala was important from another point of view. Once it was captured, it could give an easy access to the fort of Vasai because about two miles to the north of the bridge of Vasai towards Arnala, there was a space of a mile in extent, which was easily fordable.[91] Due to this advantage, Goddard had first suggested the Bombay Council to capture Arnala, before Vasai.[92]

The blockade of the Arnala fort was executed by the Bombay Government simultaneously with that of the Vasai fort. The Hanumant Buruj (Bastion) of Arnala was separate from the fort. The Bombay ships started firing at this Buruj in the last week of November 1780. One thousand Gardis employed by the Bombay Council occupied their ground at Agashi and erected batteries there.[93] For nearly one and half month, the Maratha garrison in the fort fought doggedly. When Goddard

was relieved from the siege of Vasai, he requested Commanders Nesbit to sail with the "Revenge" to the mouth of the Arnala river to intimidate the garrison.[94] In the month of January, 1781, a practicable breach having been made, Goddard fixed upon a measure to storm the fort. However, his plan was interrupted by the commandant's sending out a message on the 17th offering to surrender the place. Accordingly, the whole of the garrison of about 500 men surrendered laying down their arms. Then a party of British sepoys took possession of the fort. The acquisition of the fort of Arnala and Vasai strengthened the Bombay Government, completing their line of conquests from Gujrat to Bombay. It also brought to an end the second stage of the third phase of the first Anglo-Maratha War.

Notes

1 S.P.D.D., No. 23, pp. 552-555.

2 A mortar or bomb-cannon.

3 Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency, Vol. 14, pp.28-30; A Guide to Fort Vasai (Marathi trans.) pp. 2-3.

4 D.C.H.C., R.No. 80, F.No. 7, L.No. 5 (App.No. 54).

5 The village Sopara is situated about 5 miles to the north of Vasai.

6 The place is wrongly mentioned as Gokarna in Dickinson's Report (M.D.D. No.314, pp. 1090-1091). It should be Gokharave, a village about 5 miles to the north east of Vasai.

7 Dickinson's Report (M.D.D. No. 314, pp.1090-91).

8 P.D.D., No.452, pp. 4514-4515.

9 Ibid., pp. 4515-4516.

10 Ibid., pp. 4518-4521.

11 Dickinson's Report (M.D.D., No. 314, pp. 1094-1095).

12 Forrest ; M.S., pp. 255-56.

13 Ibid., p. 262.

14 Ibid., p. 262.

15 Forrest ; M.S., pp. 261-62.

15-a Aitihasika Patravyavahara, L. 207, pp. 172-73.

16 Visaji Keshav Lele was the Subhedar of the Subha of Uttar Konkan and his headquarters was (were) at Vasai.

17 Shenavi is one of the branches of the Saraswat Brahmin community residing on the western coast of India.

18 D.C.H.C., R80: F.13: L. No.19.

19 Ibid.

20 D.C.H.C., R.80, F.13, L.No. 24 (App.No. 47).

21 Ibid.

22 D.C.H.C., R80: F13: L.14 (App. No. 49).
Throughout the first Anglo-Maratha War, William Hornby took a personal interest in the fighting against the Marathas.

23 D.C.H.C., R80: F13: L24 (App. No. 47), R80: F13:L21 (App. No. 48); R80:F13:L14 (App. No. 49).

24 The port of Ghod Bundar is situated 5 1/2 miles to the S.E. of Vasai on the Sashti island.

25 A.L., Vol. 7, L.No. 2567; D.C.H.C., R80:F38:L62.

26 Dharavi is situated at the N.W. corner of the Sashti island at a distance of 1 1/2 miles from the Vasai fort.

27 The Pospir island, very small in size, is 2 1/2 miles to the W. of the Vasai fort.

28 Anandrao Raste was the fifth son of Bhikaji Naik Raste and brother-in-law of Nanasaheb Peshwa.

29 Vishwasrao Yashwant Panase.

30 A.L., Vol. 7, L.No. 2567.

31 D.C.H.C., R80:F13:L10 (App. No. 51).

32 D.C.H.C., R.80: F.13: L.22 (App. No. 52).

33 Ibid.

34 S.P.D.D., No. 23, p. 182.

35 Major Forbes had taken part in the battles fought on the Gujrat front during the first Anglo-Maratha War. He has written an account of these battles in his reminiscences.

36 Ibid.

37 Forrest , M.S., p. 427.

38 D.C.H.C., R.80: F.13: L.9 (App. No. 53).

39 Papadi is the part of the town of Vasai, about two miles to the N.E. of the Vasai fort.

40 D.C.H.C, R.80; F13: L.9 (App. No. 53).

41 Forrest , M.S., pp. 427-28.

42 Pali is about ~~three~~ two miles to the S.W. of Vasai on the Sashti island.

43 D.C.H.C.; R.80: F.7: L.5 (App. No. 54).

44 Forrest , M.S., p. 428.

45 S.P.D.D., No. 23, pp. 271-72.

46 Ibid.

47 Forrest , M.S., p. 431.

48 D.C.H.C., R.80: F.38: L.21; R.48; F.2; L.1, R.48; F.2: L.188 (App. Nos. 70, 71 and 63).

49 Forrest , M.S., p. 431.

50 Vajreshwari or Vajrabai is about 12 miles to the N.E. of Bhivandi and 20 miles to the north-east of Thane, in district Thane.

51 The fort of Arnala is situated on the island of the same name, which is about 9 miles to the north-west of Vasai.

52 Forrest , M.S., p. 425.

53 The village Man is about ten miles to the east of Karjat in Kolaba District.

54 Devalali is about twelve miles to the S.E. of Kalyan in Thane District.

55 ~~Ibid.~~ / Forrest, M.S., p. 425. Bhivandi is about ten miles to the N.W. of Kalyan, in Kolaba District. Sanole is about three miles to the S.E. of Bhivandi.

56 Ibid., p. 426.

57 D.C.H.C., R.80: F.7: L.4; R.80: F.7:L.1 (App.No. 57).

58 The village Madh is about five miles to the N.E. of Khopoli on the Bombay side of the Borghat.

59 Dahivali is about three miles to the S.E. of Karjat.

60 D.C.H.C., R.80: F.7: L.4; R.80: F.9: L.1 (App.No. 55).

61 D.C.H.C., R.80: F.7: L.4; 80: 9:1 (App. No. 55); 80:9:3 (App. No. 56); 80:9:4; 80:9:5.

62 D.C.H.C., R.80: F.9: L.11; 80:7:2; 80:9:1 (App.No. 55).

63 D.C.H.C., R.80: F.7: L.4.

64 D.C.H.C., R.80: F.9: L.3 (App. No. 56); 80:9:4.

65 D.C.H.C., R.80: F.7: L.6.

66 Forrest , M.S., p. 429.

67 This village is 11 miles to the north of Karjat in Taluka Karjat of Kolaba district.

68 ~~Ibid.~~ Forrest, M.S., p. 429.

69 Badalapur is about 12 miles to the S.E. of Kalyan in Thane District.

70 D.C.H.C., R.80: F.7: L.6.

71 D.C.H.C., R.80: F.9: L.7 (App. No. 59).
This village is about ten miles to the N.E. of Bhivandi in Thane district.

72 Ibid.

73 Forrest ; M.S., pp. 429-30; D.C.H.C., R80: F9:L8 (App. No.62); R80: F38: L17 (App. No. 61).
Titwala is about 5 miles to the N.E. of Kalyan in Thane District. Kambe is two miles to the east of Kalyan.

74 Forrest ; M.S., pp. 429-30.

75 D.C.H.C.,R.80: F.7: L.9.

76 D.C.H.C., R.80: F.38: L.17 (App. No. 61).

77 D.C.H.C., R.80: F.9:L.7 (App. No. 59).

78 D.C.H.C., R.80: F.7: L.8 (App.No. 60).

79 Adane is situated about 3 miles to the south of Mandavi and Bhatane is about 2 miles to the east of Mandavi. The distance between Adane and Bhatane is about one and half mile.

80 D.C.H.C., R.80: F.7: L.3 (App. No.64); 80:7:10.

81 D.C.H.C., R.48: F.2: L.1; 80:38:18 (App. Nos. 71, 66).

82 Marathi Riyasat, Uttar Vibhag - 1 (1774-1783), p.307.

83 S.P.D.D., No. 23, pp. 322-23.

84 Forrest ; M.S., pp. 435-36.

85 D.C.H.C.R.80: F.38: L.65 (App. No. 67).

86 D.C.H.C., R.48; F.2: L.No.1 (App. No. 71).

87 Mandavi is situated about nine miles to the N.E. of Vasai.

88 Forrest ; M.S., p. 433.

89 The hill fort of Mahuli is about twelve miles to the east of Vajreshwari.

90 Dickinson's Report (M.D.D. No. 314, p. 1099).

91 S.P.D.D. No. 23, pp. 271-72.

92 Ibid., pp. 159-62.

93 D.C.H.C., R.80: F.7: L.5 (App. No.54); R.52: F.9:L.2.

94 Forrest, M.S., p. 434.

THE FIRST ANGLO-MARATHA WAR

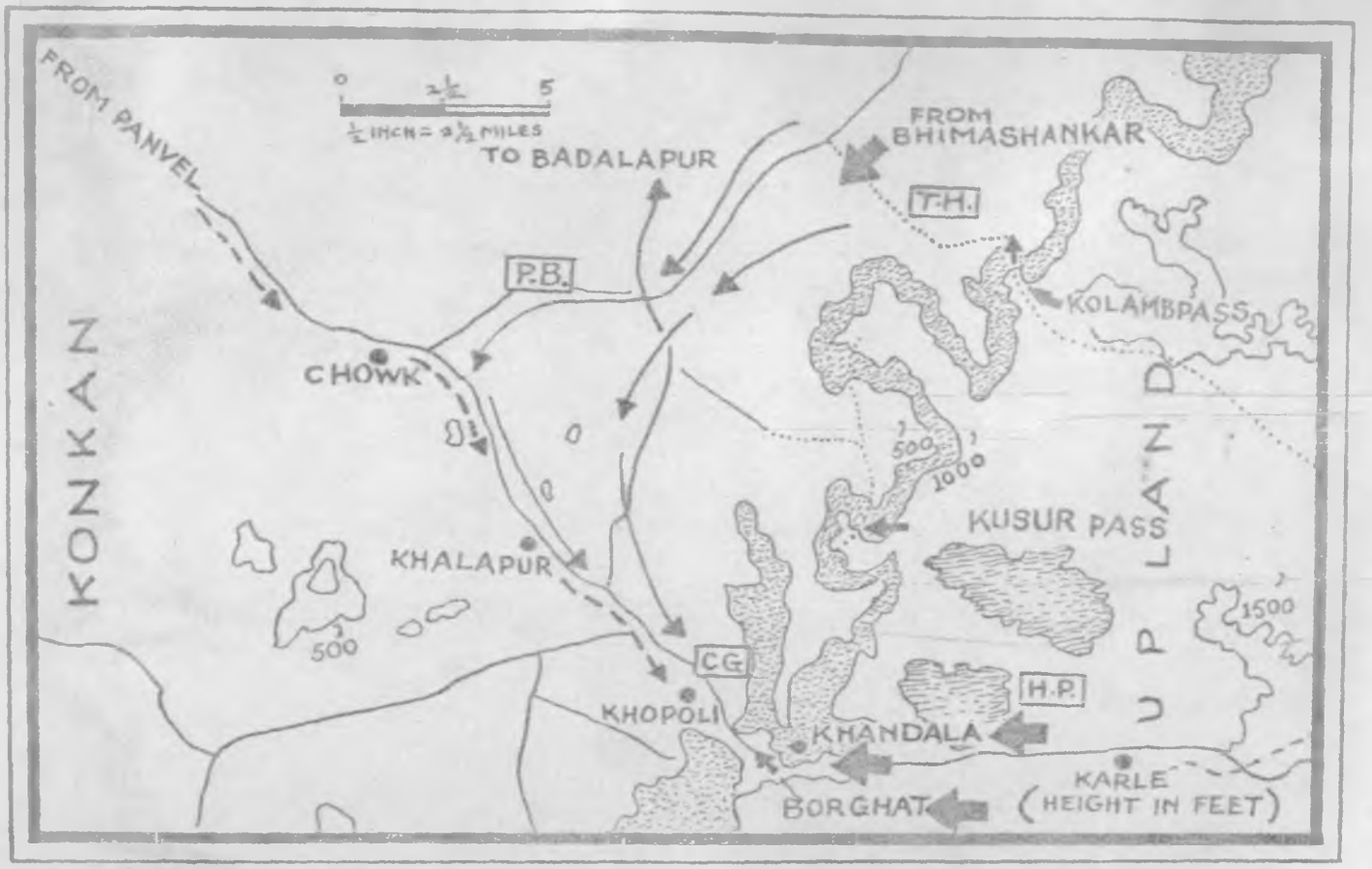
THIRD PHASE (1779-1783)

Chapter VII - THE SECOND BORGHAT EXPEDITION (1781)

For geographical references, see Map Nos. 16 to 19, attached at the beginning of this chapter, between pp. 251-252. Also see Map No. 12, attached at the beginning of chapter V, between pp. 154-155.

MAP NO. 16

SECOND BORGHAT EXPEDITION (1781)- ROUTES OF MARCH OF THE TWO ARMIES



DISPOSITION OF THE MARATHA TROOPS [CG]: BRITISH CAMPING GROUND ROUTE OF THE BRITISH ARMY UP TO KHANDALA

[ ]: ESCARPMENT [H.P.] = HARIPANT PHADKE [P.B.] = PARASHURAMBHAU PATWARDHAN

[T.H.] = TUKOJI HOLKAR

MAP NO. 17.



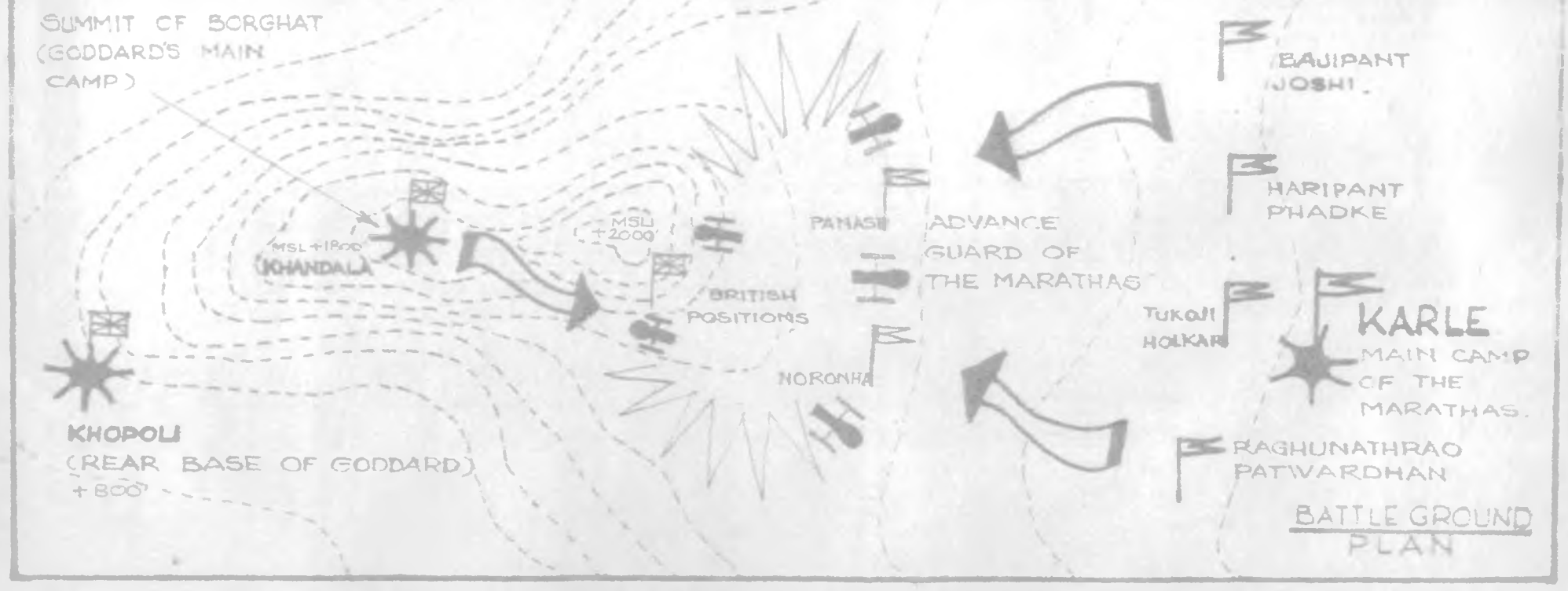
SECOND BORGHAT EXPEDITION (1781)

FIRST TACTICAL PLAN OF THE MARATHAS

(FRONTAL ATTACK ON THE ENEMY - FEB. 1781)

SECTION

SCALE: 1" = 2 MILES
HEIGHT IN FEET



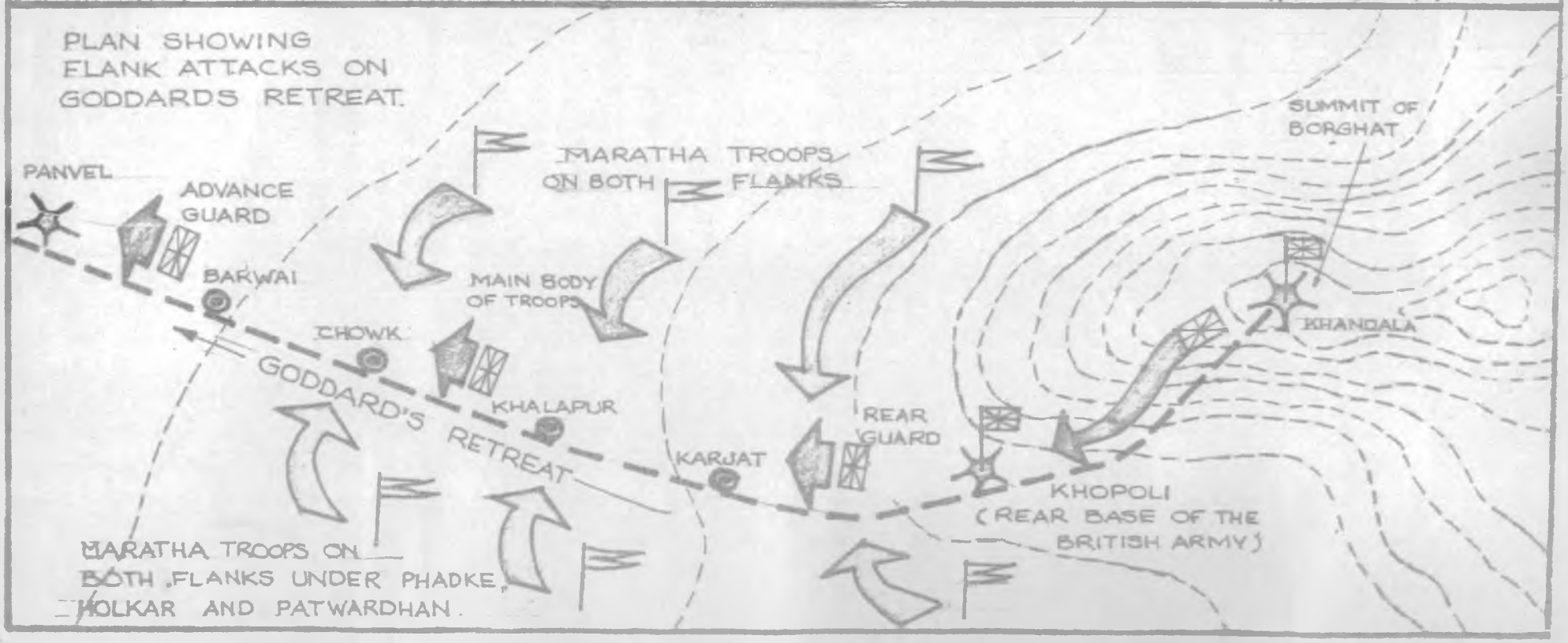
BATTLE GROUND
PLAN

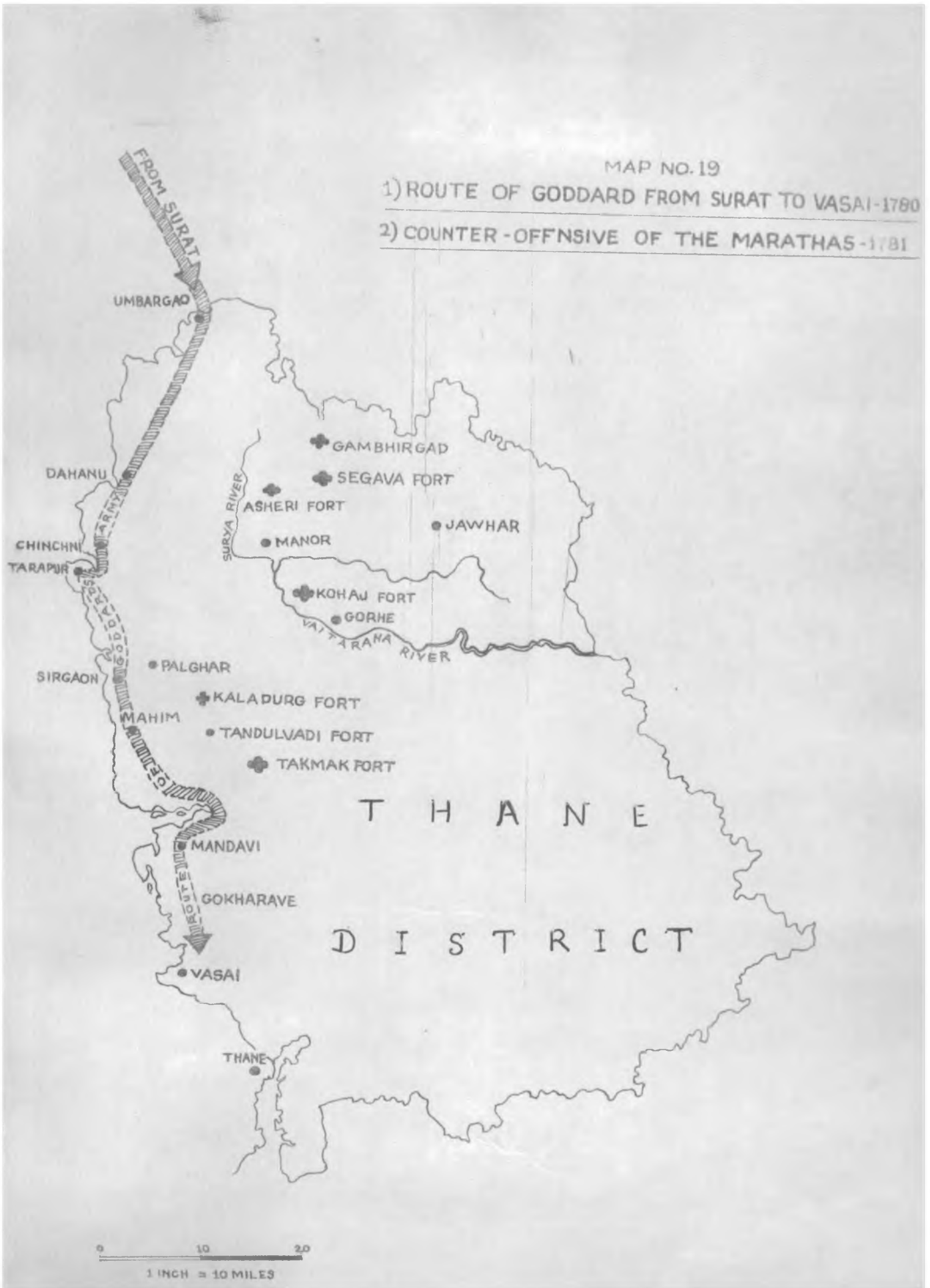
MAP NO. 18.

SECOND BORGHAT EXPEDITION (1781)

SECOND TACTICAL PLAN OF THE MARATHAS (FLANK ATTACKS ON THE REAR OF THE ENEMY)






MAP NO. 19
1) ROUTE OF GODDARD FROM SURAT TO VASAI-1780
2) COUNTER-OFFNSIVE OF THE MARATHAS-1781
FROM SURAT
UMBARGAO
DAHANU
CHINCHNI
TARAPUR
SIRGAON
MAHIM
MANDAVI
GOKHARAVE
VASAI
THANE
GAMBHIRGAD
SEGAVA FORT
ASHERI FORT
JAWHAR
MANOR
KOHAJ FORT
GORHE
SURYA RIVER
VAITARANA RIVER
PALGHAR
KALADURG FORT
TANDULWADI FORT
TAKMAK FORT
T H A N E
D I S T R I C T
0 10 20
1 INCH = 10 MILES

CHAPTER VII

THE SECOND BORGHAT EXPEDITION (1781)

The reduction of the Vasai and Arnala forts having been realized, the territorial ambitions of the Court of Directors in Western India were fully accomplished. Now it was high time for the Bombay Council to come to terms with the Pune Government. Such a gesture would have relieved them of the unnecessary expenses of the war with the Marathas and they could have diverted their armies to Madras, where Haidar Ali had wrought havoc on the British forces. The very existence of the British at Madras was on the brink of destruction. But the sober thought of negotiating with the Marathas did not appeal to the Select Committee of the Bombay Government.

On the 12th December 1780, Governor Hornby submitted his plan to the Committee, in which certain instructions were given to Colonel Goddard regarding the future policy to be adopted towards the Pune Government. According to the Governor's plan, Goddard was to be recommended immediately to acquaint the Pune Court, that if it was convinced of the superiority of the British arms due to the fall of the fort of Vasai, and were desirous of peace on equitable and moderate terms, he was still ready to enter into a treaty with them on that subject. At the same time Goddard was to support his offer with such movements of his army as might seem most likely to enforce the acceptance of it, still keeping in

view the main object of the campaign - the complete reduction of the Konkan. It was not unlikely that Nana might accept the offer of a treaty with a view to gaining time. This could be known only by the subsequent events. However, Nana would reap no advantage from it.

Whether Nana meant peace or only procrastination, Goddard should draw his advantage from his acceptance of the treaty. Goddard was to move his army immediately to the southeast without remaining at Vasai, because his prompt movements would tend to confound the Marathas and improve their impression regarding the British arms, made by the fall of Vasai and Arnala. Goddard, however, was not to be in a hurry but was to show himself before the Mahuli fort[1] (Thane district), Bahiravagad,[2] Shetgad,[3] and all the way along the foot of the Ghats, to the southward, where there were a line of forts just below the Ghats. He was to summon the commandants of these forts to surrender, but was not to allow himself to be detained by such as were absolutely inaccessible and seemed determined on resistance. Goddard was to capture only such places and forts which could be taken easily after sending the summons to surrender. Small places were not to be encouraged to hold out for a long time, because then the Bombay Company would find the Vasai campaign an unprofitable business. While Goddard was advancing, he was to keep in view an expedition to Pune and so long as this idea lasted, the Company should have leisure for effecting its real purpose of completing the reduction of the Konkan,

as the Marathas would hardly descend the Ghats with their main army, but would probably reserve it for what they would think a purpose of infinitely greater consequence, the defence of their capital Pune and expect to meet the British with advantage in the Deccan far superior to any, they could hope far below the Ghats.[4]

Brigadier General Goddard, who was at Vasai when the Bombay Council formulated its plan, did not entirely agree with it. He argued that although the mode recommended by the Bombay President was generally grounded upon the principles of the plan before the opening of the Vasai campaign, it did not pay sufficient attention to the situation in which the Maratha Government was placed after the fall of Vasai and the advantages the British could reap from it. One of the objects in the reduction of the Vasai fort was to open passage for the British to attack the Marathas in the very heart of their empire and in the neighbourhood of their capital itself, Goddard did not propose to penetrate into the Deccan. It was his firm opinion that all inferior pursuits should be laid aside and that with all the force the Bombay Company could collect, their first military effort should be of securing passes into the Deccan, ~~when either~~ whether they advance or continue to act on the defensive, as might be found most expedient. According to Goddard's opinion, it was evident that the point on which the Bombay Government ought to be most solicitous was a peace upon honorable and advantageous terms and it was equally obvious that the attainment of this

end could be hoped by a prosecution of the most vigorous and active measures and carrying the terror of the British arms as near the Maratha capital as possible, without risking too far the safety of the troops or endangering their equipments.

It was upon the above principle that Goddard proposed that the Bombay army should be immediately employed in taking possession of the Borghat. According to him, by this action the Bombay Government would be able to avail itself of many advantages that might hereafter occur. These advantages were that Shinde and Holkar, the principal Maratha sardars had been detained in Malwa and Gujrat respectively; that there was improbability of any assistance being afforded to the Pune Government by the foreign states, especially the French, whose policy was always hostile to the British; that Haidar Ali would find sufficient employment in the Karnatak for all his forces and that both Nizam Ali and Mudhoji Bhonsale would not risk exposure of their own territories to the British attacks by sending a large number of troops to the assistance of the Peshwa.

Goddard entirely concurred with the Bombay President's idea that the main object of the campaign against the Marathas ought to be not only the complete reduction of the Konkan but also an honorable conclusion of the war.

However, Goddard further argued that this object could not be so readily expected to be fulfilled by pursuing the mode recommended by the Governor of confining the military

operations within the Ghats and reducing the numerous forts dispersed throughout the Konkan, most of which were built on high hills. They could not be taken by a regular conducted assault, but by surprise strategem. This mode of warfare, harassing and destructive as it must be to the troops, would include a heavy expense to the Company, far in excess to the worth of the place when acquired. This would cause unnecessary delay in the military operations without bringing the war nearer to the conclusion. Also it would not bring any advantages in the Konkan, which would compensate for the sufferings and expense that the Company would have incurred therein.

Goddard, therefore, submitted his own plan of operations to the Bombay Council on the 19th December 1780. He suggested that the Council should immediately make the Pune Court acquainted with its readiness to enter into a treaty with them on equitable and moderate terms of peace in the manner recommended by the President. As he did not see sufficient room to justify the Council's expectations of these proposals being listened to, he recommended that the whole military force of the Bombay Government should be collected and directed towards the Ghats, which at all events to be secured first. The time required to complete the preparation of every sort for the planned expedition, especially regarding the supplies of provisions, should be employed in the reduction of the Arnala fort, which could be effected within a few days only. Afterwards, the whole force and the entire attention

should be diverted to bringing the Maratha Government to accept reasonable conditions of peace.

According to Goddard, when the British would have taken possession of the pass to Pune, the terror which their vicinity to their capital must necessarily create, seemed the most likely circumstance to produce a real and serious inclination in the Maratha Karbharis to make a treaty. Goddard was confident that this his idea would prove to be correct.

Another argument put forward by Goddard in favour of his plan, was based on information the Company had received from the Governor General and Council of Bengal of their intention to make proposals of peace with the Marathas. For this purpose, it appeared, they had framed a treaty (the treaty with Mahadaji Shinde through Colonel Muir) the copy of which had not received yet. To Goddard it seemed that whatever be the nature of the conditions proposed by the Governor General, their acceptance by the Marathas would be secured by prosecuting the war in the most vigorous manner and alarming the Marathas with the fears of immediate danger and that if the Marathas obstinately refused the terms, the Bombay Company still had in their power to make use of any advantage which circumstances would present them to acceptance.

While the British army had the possession of the Ghats and it was ready to fall upon Pune, Goddard reiterated, it would be impossible for the Marathas to detach any considerable

force into the Konkan, which would leave Pune defenceless and exposed.

Goddard further maintained that the British communication with the sea coast could be easily maintained and the protection of the country towards Kalyan could be provided for without any difficulty. Even if this was not possible, these inferior considerations might certainly give way before the grand object of carrying the British arms to the very gates of Pune where the terror about them had already reached.[5]

In short, Goddard and the Bombay Council were planning to bargain with the Marathas a treaty the form of which would be mostly favourable to them putting the Marathas at the receiving end, on the basis of their military victories at Sashti, Vasai and a new show of strength.

While the Bombay Council and Goddard were engaged in the discussion regarding the policy to be adopted towards the Marathas, a letter was received by Goddard from Sir Eyre Coote,[6] who was at Madras. The letter described in detail the havoc wrought by Haidar Ali's forces throughout the Madras Coast.[7] Coote expressed in the letter his inability to raise an army not more than 2500 soldiers. He, therefore, requested Goddard that he (Goddard) should in concert with Admiral Hughes,[8] who was now in Bombay, attack Haidar's territories in Karnatak, so that Haidar's attention would be diverted to the protection of his own country and the pressure he had brought to bear on the Madras Presidency would be

reduced.[9]

Due to the request of Sir Eyre Coote and the Governor General's order to bring the war with the Marathas to a speedy conclusion, the Bombay Government, instead of starting peaceful negotiations with the Marathas, decided to bring the Marathas to a speedy accommodation by carrying on vigorous operations against them immediately. The Bombay Council, which had initially planned the reduction of the Konkan, changed its view after taking into consideration Goddard's plan and resolved to capture the Borghat along with all the important passes as expeditiously as possible. They appointed Goddard the chief commander of their troops and put the Bombay battalion under Colonel Hartley entirely under his orders.[10]

The Bombay Council's plan of invading the Borghat was entirely based on their miscalculations regarding the Maratha power and the general political conditions of India, in 1780-1781. They thought that Nana would sue for peace as soon as they captured the Ghats. But the situation in reality was different. Nana and his sardars were well informed about the political conditions at Madras, the havoc caused by Haidar Ali in Karnatak in 1780-81 and the pitiable condition in which the British at Madras were involved. They were also aware that Khandoji Bhonsale[11] was marching from Nagpur to Bengal via Orissa.[12] The Calcutta Government was the source of financial assistance to the Presidencies of Bombay and

Madras. Once this assistance ceased, the Bombay Government would not be in a position to sustain shortage of funds. Realising this, Nana was anxiously looking forward to the march of the Bhonsales to Bengal. In Malwa and Gujrat, Mahadaji Shinde and Tukoji Holkar, the two veteran Maratha sardars, were ready with their troops to face the British assaults there. Nana had sufficient army to encounter the British on the Konkan front and at the same time to protect the Maratha capital. The British failed to realise that the feudal system on which the military organization of the Marathas was based, was favourable for raising sizable number of troops within a short period. The British hope that Nana would immediately come to his knees by mere show of strength was groundless. No doubt he had been slightly discouraged at the reverses he suffered at Sashti and Vasai and the loss of a veteran commander like Ramchandra Ganesh Kanade. No doubt he was eager for peace with the British, but not at the cost of the Maratha territories seized unjustly by the British. He wanted the delivery of these territories before concluding any treaty.

After Goddard was appointed the commander-in-chief of the troops by the Bombay Government, he immediately started preparations of the Borghat expedition. But he could not undertake the operation immediately mainly for two reasons. Firstly, the possession of the Arnala fort was a pre-condition to the capture of the Vasai fort. Goddard remained engaged in the siege of that fort from the 6th to the 18th January,

1781. Secondly, the financial aspect also acted as a deterrant to Goddard's immediate action. During his fight with the Marathas in Gujarat and at Vasai, his troops were for more than three months in arrears of pay. Though from the credit formerly granted to him on its treasury by the Bombay Council, he had found means to discharge the expenses incurred in some of the departments of his army, he was totally unable to provide for the cash for mere subsistence of the troops.[13] Goddard had placed some dependence on the revenues of the conquered territories in Gujarat. The Bombay Government had agreed that these revenues should be entirely appropriated to the expenses of the war by Goddard. Goddard had heard that the collections of revenue in Gujrat were considerable. But no part of them received him till the end of December 1780. So he solicited the financial assistance of the Bombay Council, which expressed their inability to spare any amount from their treasury. On the 19th January 1781, the day after the fall of Arnala, the British ship 'Ranger' brought two lakh rupees from Surat to Vasai.[14] Thus Goddard was relieved of his financial difficulty and became free to set out on the proposed Pune expedition. This instance, however, shows that the British were also in financial straits like the Marathas during the different stages of the war.

After the action fought at Vajreshwari on the 12th December 1780, the Maratha forces under Bajipant Anna Joshi, Bhavani Shivram, Chimapa Panase and Noronha had retired in the vicinity of the Mahuli fort, while Colonel Hartley still

stationed himself at Vajreshwari. Both sides were watching each other's movements in order to plan their future course of action. Nearly one month had elapsed since the capture of Vasai and Arnala forts by the British. During that interval no major event took place between Hartley's men and the Marathas. From the vicinity of Mahuli some of the Maratha units retreated to the eastward to Kalyan which was Hartley's main camp and depot. The Marathas appeared in considerable bodies before Kalyan, but they would not venture to make a serious attack with artillery nor were they in a position to surprise that town due to large reinforcement the garrison received some time ago of an additional battalion of sepoys.[15]

Nana all the time had kept himself informed of the new British designs and at the end of December 1780, he tried to assemble all his troops together. He sent repeated calls to Parashurambhau Patwardhan to come to Pune.[16] Parashurambhau who had just been relieved from his Kolhapur campaign,[17] had retired to Miraj, his residential place, leaving the camp of his army behind on account of sickness of his mother. He sent Raghunathrao Nilkanth Patwardhan[18] with some troops to Pune and himself remained at home[19] for some time. In the third week of December, 1780, Tukoji Holkar[20] and Ganeshpant Behere[21] were on the borders of Khandesh and Gujarat. Keso Krishna Datar[22] and Chandrarao Pawar,[23] two of the Raghoba's partisans, were carrying on fire and sword in Khandesh by stationing themselves at Ranale.[24]

Ganeshpant Behere and Tukoji Holkar fought a pitched battle with Keso Krishna and Chandrarao near Ranale and defeated them.[25] Ganeshpant had been permanently posted by Nana in Khandesh and Gujrat to keep check on the activities of the British, Fateh Sing Gaikwad and the partisans of Raghoba in these territories. Tukoji was sent there to assist him. At the end of December 1780, Nana sent letters to Ganeshpant to proceed towards Surat with his army and urged Tukoji to march towards the Konkan by the Nasik Ghat and join his troops with those of Haripant Phadke. Nana also instructed Tukoji to keep with Ganeshpant two thousand troops and five thousand Pendharis.[26] Thus at the end of 1780 the Marathas made preparation for the next round of conflict with the British on four fronts. Mahadaji Shinde was engaged on the northern front (Malwa), Khandoji and Chimanaji Bhonsales on the eastern front (Orissa), Ganeshpant Behere and Durgoji Bhapkar on the central front (Gujrat and Khandesh) and the major bulk of the Pune Government's army on the western front (the Konkan).

When Nana asked Tukoji to join Haripant Phadke, the latter had encamped with his troops at Dahivali[27] and Goddard with his troops was at Vasai. Hartley was near Vajreshwari, while Bajipant Anna Joshi, Chimapa Panase and Monsieur Noronha had established their camps near Badalapur. At this time the advance parties of the Marathas were engaged in making reconoissance trips and sudden raids on the British supply line.[28]

Goddard was detained at Vasai till the fall of the Arnala fort on the 18th January 1781. On the 22nd January 1781, he left Vasai and started his march towards the Borghat with his artillery and heavy stores. Before leaving Vasai, he left Captain Nugent, the senior officer of the detachment of the Bombay Presidency, in charge of the garrisons at Arnala and Vasai.[29]

From Vasai Goddard moved his army towards Vajreshwari to join Hartley's troops. On the 27th January, he left Vajreshwari and on the 29th he encamped on the south side of the Kali river near the village of Titwala. On the 31st January, Goddard proceeded towards Badalapur and on that very day encamped in the vicinity of the Barwai river.[30] Immediately Bajipant Anna who had encamped at Badalapur, advanced 5 miles ahead, while Haripant Phadke, who was at Dahivali, marched towards Badalapur.[31] Some of the Maratha troops occupied small hillocks on the right and left of the road, forming a defile through which the British forces had to pass. To dislodge the Marathas from these heights, Goddard ordered the vanguard of his army, consisting of the pioneer corps and four companies of Bengal grenadiers with two twelve pounders, supported by two battalion companies of Bengal sepoys, to occupy those on the right of the road. They were immediately abandoned by the Marathas as the British troops advanced. A few shots fired by the British guns soon dispersed all the Marathas, who continued to retreat as the van of Goddard's troops moved forward and left the rear

and baggage of the British troops entirely free from interruption during the remaining part of the march.[32]

The Maratha forces under Haripant Phadke and Bajipant Anna threw some rockets from the heights, but to no effect. They also fired a good deal from the matchlocks from among the bushes, which wounded three soldiers of the regiment of the Mughal cavalry. A small unit of this cavalry force had ridden forward to dislodge a body of the Maratha troops from the heights. It succeeded in its attempt. With a view to keeping his communication with Kalyan intact and to prevent his rear from exposing it to the Maratha cavalry attacks, Goddard had planned to station his army between that town and the Maratha army.

According to the plan evolved by Goddard and the Bombay Council, while the former was on his way to the Borghat, some battalions of the Bombay troops were to reduce such hill-forts in the Thane district, which would surrender within a short time. This particular move was designed with three military objects in view. Firstly, they would have given security to the fort of Sashti, Vasai and Arnala, as by their capture the Maratha power in the Thane region would have been completely wiped out. Secondly, they were useful for storing grains and other supplies as well as for watching the movements of the enemy. Thirdly, their capture would have created terror in the Maratha camp and Nana Phadnis would have been compelled to sue for peace.

As per the above plan, the commandants of the two forts

in the Thane region, Kohaj and Takmak were summoned by the British to surrender or face the consequences if they were not ready to surrender. The Kohaj fort is about ten miles to the west of Wada in Thane district and stands on a hill 1906 feet high. It can be reached only up a ravine formed by two projecting spurs.[33] Takmak fort is about fifteen miles to the southeast of Mahim in Thane district and stands on a very steep hill about 2000 feet high in a rough wooded country, a little to the north east of Tansa and Vaitarana rivers. It is more properly speaking a fortified height of the summit of a hill 400 yards in length by about one hundred in mean breadth.[34] Mahadaji Raghunath[35] was in charge of the Kohaj fort. After receiving the summons from the British, he wrote letters to Haripant Phadke and Bajipant Anna to send succour.[36]

Haripant promptly sent a contingent of 600 infantry under Pandurangpant Godbole to the rescue of the Kohaj fort. Forty pounds of ammunition was also sent with Pandurangpant, who set out in the last week of January, 1781.[37] On the 26th of that month, Haripant Phadke received letters from the fort of Kohaj and Mahuli that the Takmak fort was captured by the British and that the forts of Asheri and Kohaj would soon fall to the British arms.[38] When this news reached the Maratha camp, Bajipant Anna Joshi wrote a letter to Haripant Phadke, requesting him to march towards Neral. In the same letter he communicated Haripant that he was proceeding towards Bhatsai,[39] as it would be convenient for him to

send reinforcements to the Kohaj fort from that place. Haripant agreed with him and asked him to despatch immediately 2000 troops to the Kohaj fort[40].

When the Takmak fort fell, Haripant urged Nana repeatedly to send Tukoji Holkar and Raghunathrao Patwardhan expeditiously to his rescue, because the Maratha troops under him and Bajipant Anna were inadequate to cope with the attacks of the British who were in good number and had a strong artillery.[41] Bajipant Anna was repeatedly harping on the point that Haripant should act immediately. Therefore, Haripant moved forward and halted at Damat[42] near Neral on the 30th January. At this time Bhavani Shivram and Sakharampant Panase joined together and encamped at Badalapur; Bajipant Anna was five to six miles ahead of Badalapur. Haripant, in one of his letters complained to Nana "I am in great financial difficulty. I have not even a thousand rupees with me. My camp is suffering from scarcity of supplies."[43] In another letter to Nana he wrote, "the artillery of the British is very effective, with the result that our horsemen cannot face them. Tomorrow Bajipant and myself will join together. It would have been better, if Tukoji Holkar had arrived by now."[44] Haripant also insisted for immediate help and requested that Anandrao Raste be despatched expeditiously. By the end of January 1781, Tukoji Holkar and Raghunathrao Patwardhan had arrived in Pune while Parashurambhau Patwardhan had just left his home[45] at Miraj.

On the 1st February 1781, Goddard marched to Badalapur where he halted on the 2nd and the 3rd instant. Goddard

conceived it possible that the Marathas camping near Badalapur might intend either to risk an action upon the arrival of the English troops there, or, what was more probable, they would avail themselves of some favourable situation of the road through which the British forces were to pass, to make an attack upon the line and impede the progress of the British troops. So to meet the probable Maratha attack, he ordered the advance guard of the army to be reinforced by the first battalion of the Bengal sepoys. Goddard, in this respect, proved to be a wise man. Haripant Phadke and Bajipant Anna had planned to make a concerted move against the advancing British troops.[46] The route through which the British troops were advancing, led through a short though narrow defile. The small parties of Maratha soldiers had hidden themselves behind bushes, hollows, trees and rocky heights on both the sides of the road. No sooner did the van of the advanced party of the British appear beyond the defile, than the Marathas commenced fire of smaller guns from behind their covers. Due to the extreme fogginess of the weather, Goddard was not in a position to ascertain the exact number of the Maratha parties. The Marathas had also brought two cannon pieces, but due to the hilly region they had to keep these guns at a distance of more than a mile from the British advance guard. Goddard immediately exchanged fire and was successful in driving away and dispersing the Maratha parties from their secure positions. Goddard's artillery continued to fire on the dispersing and retreating

Marathas. The shots were well directed and they fell amongst the groups of the Maratha horsemen.[47]

On the contrary, neither the Maratha artillery nor their cavalry could give a good account of ~~themselves~~ itself. The Konkan plains were not suitable for the movements of the horses. Haripant has expressed his opinion in one of his letters that the Konkan plain was so narrow that it obstructed the mobility of his army and that the short-range guns of the Marathas could not be well directed towards the enemy.[48]

Goddard was carefully watching the movements of the Marathas. By the reports of some Maratha prisoners who fell into the British hands, as well as the intelligence received from his spies, Goddard came to know that Haripant and Baji-pant Anna had sent off their bazaars and baggage of every kind to Khopoli, where they meant to follow themselves and proceed up the Ghats immediately. According to another report that Goddard received, Haripant was intending to proceed up the Ghats leaving some of his sardars with the large body of horse below it. Goddard had left Carpenter's whole battalion in garrison at Kalyan, which would secure that place from all danger. Goddard was now within four or five days' march of Khopoli.

It would be interesting to analyse from the military point of view the object and the plan of Goddard's forward march. The main object of Goddard's forward thrust was to to take possession of the Borghat as early as possible and establish a strong and permanent military post there with a

strong garrison. The capture of the Borghat would have given the British a long chain of territories right from Bombay upto the summit of the Ghats. Simultaneously, with the reduction of important strongholds and forts in the Thane region by other commanders of the Bombay army, the Maratha power in Thane and Kolaba districts between Khandala and Bombay would have been completely annihilated. The Marathas would then never venture to cross the Ghats and harass the British possessions of Thane, Kalyan, Vasai and Bombay. As the summit of the Borghat commanded the Rajmachi, the Kusur, the Kolamba and the Bhimashankar passes as well as the routes leading to Pune and Bombay, the British would have been able to watch and control the activities of the Marathas by means of a strong post there. Besides, they could fall upon Pune very easily, whenever circumstances demanded.

Goddard had learnt a lesson from the first Borghat expedition of 1778-79, that unless the line of communication in the rear was kept intact, it was foolish to descend the Ghat into the plains near Karla, which were favourable to the movements of the Maratha cavalry. Geographically, the line of communication and defence between the Borghat and Bombay was divided into five parts, Bombay to Thane (Sashti) was the first line, Sashti to Panvel was the second, Panvel to Kalyan was the third, Kalyan to Khopoli was the fourth and Khopoli to Khandala was the fifth. Thane, Panvel, Kalyan, Khopoli and Khandala were the main centres of communication and supplies. Goddard, with the assistance of the Bombay

Government, had taken care to guard these centres against the Maratha raids.

In the first Borghat expedition, the main defect of the British army was the lack of cavalry. So Goddard had taken with him a small regiment of the Mughal cavalry. It was not adequate to face the big Maratha cavalry. But it was sufficient to protect the non-fighting forces, bag and baggage, etc.

To add to the mobility of his troops, Goddard sent cumbersome bag and baggage to Kalyan.

As compared to the first Borghat expedition, the British had now a more secure territory in their rear, as they had captured Sashti, Vasai, Arnala, Uran and other islands. Besides, the capture of Takmak ~~and Kohaj~~ forts safeguarded their Konkan territories.

After establishing a strong post at Khandala, Goddard was not to hasten down to Pune. He was to wait at Khandala and watch the future developments.

The only defect of Goddard's military plan was that he ignored the importance of the capture of different passes like Kusur, Kolamb and Rajmachi through which the Marathas could pour in their troops. One of the basic principles of war is that if a commander is engaged in mountain warfare, he should take possession of all passes round about the main mountain pass which he uses as his main base.

The Marathas had based their tactics on their traditional mode of warfare. They were not in a position to open a major

counter offensive due to two reasons. Firstly, Goddard's artillery was far superior to their own and secondly, the region between Khopoli and Panvel was not suitable for the rapid manoeuvres of their cavalry. So they decided to adopt the same tactics, which proved fruitful in the first Borghat expedition. According to the plan evolved by Haripant Phadke and Bajipant Anna, the Maratha guerilla bands were to hover round Goddard's flanks and rear and interrupt his march towards the summit of the Borghat. As far as possible, they were to keep away from the firing range of Goddard's artillery. If Goddard ascended the summit of the Ghats, his rear was to be blocked by reduction of Khopoli. Some of the Maratha troops were to surprise Kalyan, which was the main camp of Hartley's forces of the Bombay battalion and drive away the enemy from that place. By the capture of Kalyan and Khopoli the third and fourth line of defence and supplies of the British troops would crumble. If Goddard descended the Ghats and marched towards Puhe, he was to be allowed to advance as far as Karla and even Vadgao. Once he entered the plains, he was to be brought to his knees by flank manoeuvres, by encircling him on all sides, and by setting fire to all the surrounding territories. If the Marathas succeeded in driving away the British from Khopoli, they were to make a counter-offensive in the region round about Thane and Vasai and attempt to regain those forts and territories, which the British had seized from the Marathas. Thus we find that the theatre of operation of the second

Borghat expedition covered territories from the Borghat upto Thane.

After the attempt made by the Marathas on the 4th February 1781 to create confusion in the British camp by flank attacks proved abortive, they thought it proper to desist from the opposition they had hitherto resorted to. A body of five to six thousand horse under Bajipant Anna was sent to harass Goddard's rear and endeavour to pick up any of the lingering bazaar bullocks or baggage out of the defence ~~of the~~ line. Here also the Marathas were unsuccessful.[49]

Nana Phadnis sent some instructions regarding the tactics to be adopted against the advancing British. According to these instructions, Sakharampant Panase, Bhavani Shivram and Tukoji Holkar were to block the Borghat. Tukoji Holkar had just arrived at the Ghats with Raghunathrao Patwardhan. Nana further instructed that after the arrival of Goddard at Khopoli, Bajipant Anna should occupy his rear, while Haripant should move his army to one of his flanks. There was a possibility of the British forces advancing towards Umbarkhind[50] under such circumstandes. Nana, therefore, insisted that the Marathas should guard the passes of Kusur, Kolamb and Umarwada.[51] If Goddard forced his way towards the summit of the Ghat, then Bajipant was to keep two to three thousand troops at the foot of the Borghat near Khopoli and proceed himself to the Ghats by another route.[52]

On the 8th February 1781, Goddard's troops reached Khopoli, where he found the Marathas had posted themselves and had brought there a number of guns and a large body of infantry. The strength of the enemy was 4000 men. Goddard resolved upon attacking the troops on the night of the 8th February before the Marathas could collect a more formidable force or improve the works which they were constructing.[53]

As per Nana's instructions, Sakharampant Panase and Bhavani Shivram blockaded the Ghats in the first week of February 1781. Haripant himself inspected this work. ~~it~~. His opinion was that the blockade was not sufficiently strong and that Goddard could force his march upwards through it. Haripant wrote to Nana to send some long-range guns to Talegao and ask Jayavantrao Panase[54] to camp at Talegao with all equipment

Continued on next page/

in readiness.[55] At the time of the blockade Tukoji Holkar was on the summit of the Ghat. The Marathas constructed wooden and stone platforms at different places on the slope of the Ghat with a view to wrecking the advancing units of Goddard. Goddard had intelligence that Tukoji Holkar had brought with him 15,000 horse, besides Pendharis. He, therefore, thought it expedient to order a very strong party to advance first, which consisted of the Pune Corps in front, followed by two companies of Bombay and Madras European Grenadiers, four companies of Bengal sepoy Grenadiers, the 1st and the 7th battalions of Bengal sepoys and the 8th Battalion of Madras sepoys. The light 3 pounder pieces of Bombay artillery carried by luscars preceded the European Grenadiers and two light 6 pounder field pieces marched in the rear of the 7th Bengal and in front of the 8th battalion of Madras sepoys.[56]

The whole party was ready to march and the van entered the bottom of the pass at midnight.[57] In little more than an hour they reached the first post half way up the pass, which the Marathas, after discharging their pieces, immediately abandoned.[58] The British troops then pushed forward towards the Darwaja (Gate) or second post, which was most probably just below the modern temple of Waghjai. This was deemed the strongest part of the pass. Here the Marathas had thrown up a breastwork. As the British troops advanced from its left, the Marathas fired some guns and threw a considerable number of rockets. Goddard's troops being under cover, the

rockets could do very little harm to the British. In the meantime, the Pioneer Corps, with two companies of Bengal Grenadier sepoys, having taken possession of some heights on the right of the road, moved towards the Darwaja, which the Marathas instantly relinquished, but not without carrying off their guns. They removed these guns to a hill in front of the Darwaja. From that hill they continued firing at the enemy. Goddard then ordered his small pieces to be mounted on an eminence. These artillery pieces fired upon the Marathas and dispersed them. The British troops got through the Darwaja and then moved towards a pagoda, which was considered as the summit of the Ghat. This summit of the Ghat was exactly on the plain where the temple of Goddess Waghjai stands today. From this summit the British forces marched to Khandala.[59]

In the second expedition of the Borghat, the British did not require to spend their time in constructing the road up the Ghat, as it had already been laid down during the previous expedition. Another feature of the expedition was that Brigadier General Goddard alone was responsible for all policy matters and military operations. So there was perfect unity of command which was nonexistent in the first expedition due to the appointment of the Pune Committee. Naturally Goddard's forces marched far more rapidly than those under Colonel Egerton up the ghats.

When Goddard's troops reached the top of the Borghat, Tukoji Holkar, Sakharampant Panase, Bhavani Shivram and

Haripant Phadke retreated a little beyond Khandala and encamped there. Bajipant Anna was still stationed at Khopoli and Raghunathrao Patwardhan's camp was at Umbarkhind. Haripant Phadke directed Bajipant to proceed towards the Ghat by the Kolamb pass, leaving behind nearly three thousand men near Khopoli. Raghunathrao Patwardhan was asked to arrive at the Ghat by way of Umarwada. Haripant repeatedly wrote to Nana to send Parashurambhau Patwardhan, if he had arrived at Pune.

The British arrived at the top of the Ghat without the loss of one man killed or wounded. This was due in great degree to the cool and steady conduct of Colonel Parker who commanded the morning party and also to the clear and exact information Goddard received from a plan of the Ghat furnished him by Captain Jackson, which enabled him to form the previous plan of attack in a manner that would expose the troops to the least possible danger. Goddard was particularly satisfied with the behaviour of Lieutenant Brown, his Aid-de-camp, and Richardson, who accompanied the party up the Ghat. It was due to their activity and former knowledge of the situation of the ground that Goddard could successfully march to the top of the Ghat through the enemy lines.[60]

Having thus far successfully prosecuted the plan, mutually agreed to by Goddard and the Bombay Council, it now remained to determine the measures most proper to be pursued in the remaining part of the campaign in order to bring the war to an honorable conclusion. So far no overture or proposal of

peace was made by the Pune Government, as expected by Goddard and the Bombay Council. Goddard himself was not in a position to take initiative in peace proposals, as they would be construed as an anxiety for peace and Nana might be encouraged to persist in hostilities and rather increase than relax his demands of advantage.

After Goddard encamped at the summit of the Borghat, the Marathas could not ascertain his future plans. Their intelligence department brought conflicting reports about the same. While one report was that Goddard was to embark on a direct expedition to Pune, according to another, Goddard was to conquer all the Maratha possessions in the Konkan and the third gave out that Goddard was to create permanent posts on the Ghat and station himself there.[61] Amidst such confusing reports, the Maratha commanders found it difficult to evolve a definite line of action to vitiate the British plans.

Nana Phadnis was so enraged at the easy passage of Goddard's troops to the summit of the Ghats in the presence of his star commanders like Haripant Phadke and Tukoji Holkar that he sought explanation from both the commanders for their humiliating retreat and their inability to inflict a single casualty on the enemy. Both admitted their fault.[62]

At this time Nana was also active in gathering information regarding the strength of Goddard's army as well as his plans and tactics. Nana had a very efficient espionage system. It was because of his ever alert spy ring that Nana could outwit his rivals at home and the enemies outside. After Shivaji, he seems to be the only Maratha ruler who gave utmost priority to the spy-system. His political agents at the courts of various rulers in India acted as his spies. In collecting information about Goddard's troops, he harnessed the services of the local people. He also made use of statements or jabānīs of the prisoners from Goddard's camp. Sometimes his commanders and officers were successful in capturing Goddard's spies. Nana relied on local people like cowherds, peasants, kolis (fishermen) etc. who were expert in collecting information by various means and methods. Two peasants employed by Ramrao Narayan Deshmukh, an officer of Nana Phadnis at the Rajmachi fort, supplied information to Nana regarding the strength of Goddard's army as well as the movements and plans of Raghoba and the British.[63] One oil-merchant from Jagadishpur in north India, who was imprisoned by Nana's men, not only gave information about the composition of Goddard's army, but also the rates of different commodities in his camp.[64] One Muslim boy from Goddard's camp, who was captured by the Pendharis on the Maratha side, supplied information that Goddard would not leave his camp at the summit of the Borghat and march towards Pune until he was joined by Raghoba, who was bringing with him Gaikwad's troops and artillery from Gujrat.[65] This was

an important piece of information, because it threw light on the intention of the enemy. Of course the information regarding Raghoba was not correct. At a later stage of the second Borghat expedition (in April 1781), Ramrao Narayan Deshmukh sent two soldiers in the disguise of peasants to Goddard's camp at Khandala. These two soldiers saw every nook and corner of Goddard's camp and gave information regarding the movements of the retreat of Goddard's troops from Khandala to Khopoli, acute shortage of food and supplies in Goddard's camp and the batteries erected by Goddard in the territories round about Khandala.[66] This shows how Nana's spy system was working.

Goddard himself camped at Khandala with his advance guard. But the rear-guard units together with the bag and baggage had been stationed at Khopoli. After the arrival of Goddard to Khandala, the first impression of the Marathas was that he would descend the Ghat and advance to Pune like the British army on the 1778-1779 expedition. They, therefore, brought Bajipant Anna and Raghunathrao Patwardhan, Parashurambhau's son, both of whom were in the rear of the British army at Khopoli, to the front to join Haripant's units. This was a great mistake from the tactical point of view. Because, now the rear of the British army was relieved of the pressure and the British could easily bring their supplies from Panvel to Khopoli without any interruption.[67]

Another tactical mistake committed by the Marathas was the concentration of almost all their forces near the Borghat. Consequently, their territories and forts in the Konkan were exposed to the British assaults.[68]

Goddard's movements created a great panic in Pune. Madhavrao Peshwa II fled to Purandar. Parvatibai was to follow him after two days. Most of the inhabitants abandoned the town. The result was that a bullock could not be hired even for a high charge of Rs. 10/- within the radius of 8 miles of Pune.[69]

The Marathas were deficient in artillery and accurate marksmanship. So when they found Goddard in a well-protected plain on the summit of the Borghat, they planned the following line of action: The Maratha advance units were to keep themselves in the plains near Karla. From that place they were to advance near the foot of the Ghat and direct their guns and rockets at Goddard's camp. If Goddard moved down the plains as expected by the Marathas, he was to be allowed to advance beyond Karla and then was to be encircled on all sides. A strong Maratha unit was to be stationed near Khopoli. It was to cut off the supplies of the British sent from Panvel. The different passes like Kusur, Kolamb, Rajmachi and Umbarkhind and the territories in the Konkan, including different forts, were to be reinforced. The territories round Thane and Kalyan were to be looted and burnt by the Pendharis and other roving bands.

Haripant Phadke and Tukoji Holkar, who were at Khandala,

and formed the front line of the Maratha army, retreated upto Karla down the plains. The distance between Goddard's advance guard on the Ghat and the front line of the Marathas was nearly 10 to 11 miles. The Maratha front line had, besides Haripant and Tukoji, Bajipant Anna Joshi and Monsieur Noronha.[70] They had a unit of artillery with them. The mode of attack adopted by Haripant and others was to go near the foot of the Ghat, fire cannon shots into the camp of Goddard and then to retire to the main camp of operation at Karla. Throughout the month of February, there were many exchanges of fire between the two sides. The Marathas could not direct their cannon properly because the British were entrenched in a difficult and awkward position at a great height. It was easy for the British to take cover on the rocky hills, while the Marathas below the plains did not enjoy such advantages. The British gunners could well direct their guns from their heights to the throngs of Maratha foot-men in the plains.[71]

On the 13th February 1781, Nana himself came upto Khadakala,[72] inspected the Maratha camp and returned to Chinchwad.[73] There were several hot exchanges of fire on the 13th, 14th and 16th between the advance parties of Haripant, Tukoji, Noronha on the one hand and Goddard's advance guards. However, the exchange of fire on the 20th was the severest one. It lasted for nearly three hours. In this skirmish, a French gunner from the Maratha side was killed by a cannon shot. He had been newly employed by Monsieur Noronha. He was as brave as Noronha.[74] On the 1st March,

the advance parties of the British descended to Ghat and tried to attack the forward positions of the Marathas. Immediately, the Maratha horsemen dismounted from their horses and in company with their footmen counterattacked the British advancing units and drove them back to their positions on the hills.[75]

Throughout the month of February and the first week of March, the Marathas had concentrated their forces and attention on the frontal attacks from a great distance.[75-a] But they could not dislodge Goddard from his position. Nor did he descend into the plains below as expected by them. Soon they realised their mistake of keeping the rear of the enemy open by removing Bajipant Anna Joshi and Raghunathrao Patwardhan from Khopoli to the front on the Karla side.[76] So far their tactics were based on the past experience of the British army descending down the plains in the direction of Pune and making itself a pray to the Maratha hovering troops. But Goddard proved to be more shrewd a commander than they expected. He was successful in baffling them regarding his future motives, plans and manoeuvres. Besides, he realised the trap laid down by the Maratha commanders and refrained from the forward march. As their anticipation failed, the Maratha commanders decided to concentrate on the rear of the enemy instead of his front lines. Anandrao Raste was accordingly asked to proceed towards Khopoli. As he refused to go there, unless he was given ten thousand troops with him, Raghunathrao Patwardhan was sent to Khopoli with

five thousand men on the 18th February.[77]

In the meantime Nana sent letters to Parashurambhau Patwardhan to go to the help of Haripant Phadke as early as possible. Parashurambhau arrived at Nana's camp at Chinchwad on the 10th February via Koregao, Kavadi and Theur.[78] He immediately proceeded to the Borghat to survey the positions occupied by the British.

It was decided by Haripant, Parashurambhau and others that five thousand troops accompanying Raghunathrao Patwardhan were insufficient to cut off the British supplies of grains and fodder at Khopoli. Parashurambhau was, therefore, appointed, with 10,000 men to go to the rear of Goddard's army and help Raghunathrao. Parashurambhau decided to descend by way of the Kolamba[79] pass. Goddard's mistake in not guarding the passes nearby thus proved to be a boon to the Marathas. On the 2nd March 1781, Parashurambhau descended the Kolamba Ghat with difficulty. His men had to get down from the horses. On the 4th he started descending the Ghat.[80] His men had to descend one by one holding the reins of the horse in their hands. There were a good many Pendharis in Raghunathrao's camp. When Raghunathrao reached near Khopoli on the 4th, these Pendharis looted one thousand oxen from the British camp at Khopoli. After Parashurambhau's arrival, they brought additional seven hundred oxen, grains and bags of sugar to the Maratha camp.[81] On the same day, a convoy of food-grains was going from Panvel to Khopoli with an escort of two companies and two guns. The escort halted at

Chowk,[82] nearly ten miles from Khopoli. The Pendharis in Raghunathrao's camp hovered round the escort and suddenly brought some cattle which had left the main line of the marching unit.[83]

Thus the Marathas were attempting at blocking the front and the rear of Goddard's forces. But these measures were inadequate. The British had captured the Takmak fort and their siege of Kohaj fort was in progress. Also some of the British units were moving about Kusur and Kolamba passes.[84] The Marathas, therefore, thought that the British would soon attempt to take possession of important passes and forts in the Konkan. From the point of view of strategy, it was essential for the Marathas to maintain their lines of communication and supplies from the Konkan safe. The Kusur, the Kolamba and the Rajmachi passes were the arteries through which the Marathas could rush in their supplies and succour to the Borghat. Through these passes only they could keep their contact with the Konkan.

Haripant despatched Pandurangpant Godbole to the Kohaj fort. Ganeshpant Behere, who was stationed in Khandesh, was asked to attack Parner and come near Kohaj and Mahuli.[85] This move would have brought pressure on the British at Vasai, Durgoji Bhapkar was asked to fight in the Gujrat territories. Mahimaji Shinde, who had arrived at Haripant's camp on the 9th February, was sent to Rajmachi[86] with four hundred infantry.[87] The Kohaj fort was further reinforced by the despatch of one hundred soldiers under the command of Madanrao

Yerunkar.[88] A strong guard was posted at Dhamandara.[89]

To harass the British, the Marathas adopted the policy of looting and ravaging the territories which the British had conquered from them. Whenever they saw any British contingent coming towards them, they used to run away and disperse immediately. The British troops had no effective answer to the tactics of the flying squade of the Marathas. Because of lack of strong cavalry, they could not pursue the flying Maratha columns.

The Pendharis who had accompanied the troops of Raghunathrao Patwardhan and Parashurambhau, went upto Kalyan and plundered the British territories.[90] The Maratha fury was specially directed towards the whole paragana of Panvel. On the 9th March 1781, a body of about 1000 Maratha horse appeared at Panvel in the morning. They spread themselves over the whole paragana for the purpose of plundering and destroying whatever they could meet with. They drove away some hundred head of cattle and in the evening set fire to a number of villages. They were bent upon burning all the forage with a view to destroying the oxen in the British camp. They set fire to a considerable quantity of hay and straw at and near Panvel. The villages in the Panchanad district suffered the same fate. The Marathas then appeared before Taloje. They reduced the villages round Taloje to ashes.[91]

The policy of burning and ravaging one's own territory or the enemy's territory is called 'scorched earth policy'

in military parlance. This policy of the Marathas had an adverse effect on the British line of supplies. This is well reflected in the Bombay Council's letter to Goddard in which it is remarked, "The chief part of the rice for the consumption of this island (Bombay) is produced in the Konkan and notwithstanding our army has been in possession of the country, the quantity imported this season is very inadequate to our former receipts and yet the army itself has not been subsisted by the produce of the country but demands made upon us for supplies. The importance and necessity of protecting the country was very fully realised as it appears very justly explained in the President's minute of the 6th August and we exerted every effort in our power for that purpose. We even now think this a point meriting your most serious consideration as we understand large quantities of grain still remain in the country in stocks, which the inhabitants dare not venture to thrash out and remove without protection from the enemy. Both this army and this island may probably otherwise be much straitened for subsistence."[92]

The army always marches on its stomach. If the supplies of food and other materials are proper, then alone any army has a chance of success. Goddard, in the month of February, 1781 enquired into the quantities of supplies collected at Belapur, in order that an escort might be immediately sent to bring it to the army at Khopoli and the Borghat. But to his great disappointment, he found that the supply there was so inadequate as to render the future prospect

of the supply both distant and uncertain. He, therefore, requested the Bombay Council to send immediately the supplies to Belapur.[93]

The Bombay Government itself was suffering from an acute shortage of money. In its letter of the 17th August 1780 to the Governor General and Council at Calcutta it had asked for the supplies of money. Every department of the Bombay Government was largely in arrears. Goddard had pressed the Bombay Council for providing himself with money. But it was totally out of the Council's power to afford any further assistance than allotting the receipts from the new acquisitions dependent on Surat for the service of the army.[94]

The Marathas were in equally difficult financial position. Parashurambhau Patwardhan has described his financial distress in one of his letters to Gangadharrao Raste in the following words: "The Peshwa's forces are not active. The troops are complaining about shortage of food and money. Under such circumstances it is easy to forsee how our men will fight."[95] The Marathi documents of this period have recorded one instance in which Mahimaji Shinde, one of the infantry officers, arrived late at the camp of Haripant with his footmen. But the Gardis did not report as they had not received their pay.[96]

Though the British and the Marathas suffered alike due to the shortage of money and supplies, the causes of financial distress in respect of the two parties were different. The British had plunged themselves into a mad venture, a war,

which was beyond their capacity to endure financially. Even before the war with the Marathas started, the annual budget of the Bombay Government could not strike a balance between its receipts and expenditure, due to the excess of the latter over the former. In fact, the Bombay Government had started the Maratha war to improve its financial position. But contrary to their expectations, their financial position deteriorated more and more as the war prolonged. The additional revenues which the Bombay Government obtained by conquering the Maratha territories in Gujrat and the Konkan were exhausted in the war expenditure. Due to the continuous conflict with the Marathas for quite a long period, they were not able to stabilise their administration in the newly conquered territories. Naturally, whatever was produced in the country was used for the additional troops which the Bombay Council had to raise on account of war conditions.

The shortage of supplies and money in the Maratha army was due to the feudal system of their army organization and negligence of duties on the part of the revenue officers. As these causes are explained in detail in the preceding chapters of the present work, they need not be repeated here.

Nana Phadnis was baffled by the policy of Goddard, who was stationing himself at the summit of the Borghat for more than a month. He was neither descending the Ghat on the Pune side, nor was he retreating back towards Khopoli. The minor skirmishes and actions that took place between the Marathas and the British during Goddard's camp on the Borghat would not bring the war to any decisive result. Under such

circumstances, Nana sent his envoys Bahiro Pandit and Ranchod Shenoy to Goddard with a view to assessing his real sentiments in encamping on the Ghat. Goddard admitted them to conversation. During their conversation, Goddard was surprised to find that they had not brought with them any credentials from Nana and were not empowered to enter into any ~~army~~ treaty with the British. Consequently, the two parties expressed only general sentiments of peace; nothing concrete came out of their conversation. During the conversation, Nana's envoys were constantly harping on Haidar's grand successes against the British at Madras and the letter Nana received from Sir Eyre Coote proposing Nana to conclude peace with the English and unite his forces with theirs against Haidar. The conversation with Bahiro Pandit and Ranchod Shenoy created an impression on Goddard that Nana was trying to bargain on Haidar's successes to get good terms from the English and was also protracting negotiations till circumstances favoured his views. Another significant point from Goddard's view was that Nana pleaded ignorance of Calcutta Government's proposals which were sent to him (Nana) through Madhoji Bhonsale. So he thought that Nana was not serious about the treaty.[97] His view was shared by the Bombay Council.[98] Thus the first round of negotiations failed.

Nana wanted peace, but at the same time he was not ready to allow the aggressor his fruits of aggression. In sending Bahiro and Ranchod to Goddard, Nana not only wished to know

the real motives of Goddard in his Borghat expedition, but also to impress upon the British that the Marathas were not at the receiving end, that the British had lost prestige at the hands of his ally Haidar and that they should make a treaty with the Marathas on honorable terms, by relinquishing all the Maratha territories they had unjustly seized since the commencement of hostilities between the two powers in 1774.

By the middle of March, Goddard was fully convinced that encouraged by the success of Haidar or induced by Haidar's promises to come to his help, Nana Phadnis had determined to adhere to the engagements mutually formed and steadily to persevere in alliances. Nana, perhaps, was anxiously waiting for the favourable results of the expedition of the troops of the Bhonsales of Nagpur under Khandoji Bhonsale and Bhawani Kalo, which were on their way from Cuttack to Bengal.[99] This expedition was the result of the Quadruple Alliance of October 1779 between the Nizam, the Peshwa, Mudhoji Bhonsale and Haidar Ali. Goddard thought that even in the present stage the British could march to Pune and take its possession in six or seven days. But he also knew well that should the English determine upon this step, the Marathas would set fire to their capital, so that notwithstanding its acquisition, it would be of no value to the British. Moreover, this action would not make any advance in bringing an accommodation with the Marathas, which alone could justify the British penetration into the Deccan.

Goddard, therefore, wrote to the Bombay Council expressing his views about the future plans that should be adopted against the Marathas. As an immediate plan, he suggested the Council that two or three battalions of sepoys and in that proportion a unit of artillery be stationed on the Ghat at a strong post and the remainder of the army be encamped during the rains at some part of the Konkan, with the readiness of moving with rapidity to the support of the Ghat or assist in the defence of Bombay, as circumstances might render expedient.

As it would be of the utmost consequence to keep up a safe and regular communication from Bombay with the post at the Ghat and its security would become an object of the first consequence, some place for encamping the army be fixed upon as near to the Ghat as possible. Panvel or even Chowk should be preferred in that case.[100]

This was the plan to be pursued, which Goddard put into writing in his letter of the 12th March to the Bombay Committee. The Committee had a meeting on the 27th March in which various objections were taken against keeping a large force at the head of the Ghat during the monsoon, the danger and difficulty of affording it supplies, the vast expense of stores and ammunition and the danger of leaving so large a part of the force in a situation where perhaps the Bombay Company could not command their services, if there should be a necessity for them at Bombay or be able to give them assistance if they were hard pressed. After all, it did not appear that main-

taining a post at the top of the Ghat would answer the purpose of keeping the Marathas out of the Konkan. It was evident from Goddard's letter that a very large body of the Maratha troops was in the Konkan, by which a large British convoy was exposed to imminent danger. On the whole the Committee thought that if at any time it might be judged expedient to possess the Ghats, they might again be secured with much less difficulty and danger, than would attend maintaining a post there during the rainy season.

The Committee then recommended to Goddard that he should drop the idea of keeping possession of the Borghat and keeping his army engaged in the coming rainy season. It further recommended that he should reduce some strongholds of the Marathas which might afford convenient and secure stations during the rains. Goddard was further advised to station his army in two or more divisions at the most convenient places like Panvel, Kalyan or Vajreshwari, wherefrom the troops could be easily transported to Bombay in case of necessity. Agreeable to Goddard's proposal, the Bombay Committee decided to send back the Madras detachment to its headquarters to reinforde Sir Eyre Coote's troops against Haidar Ali. The Bombay Committee also recommended to Goddard that previous to the setting in of the monsoon, the Bombay troops should be withdrawn into garrison, which would cause a further reduction in its expenses.[101]

Goddard concurred with the recommendations of the Bombay Committee, but he informed the Committee his inability to

carry the measures into immediate execution because of the harassing tactics of the Marathas in his rear in the region between Panvel and Khopoli.

The tactics of the Marathas during this period are made clear in a letter to Nana by Parashurambhau Patwardhan, who along with Raghunathrao and Balvantrao Patwardhan as well as Balajipant Phatak was camping near Khopoli. Parashurambhau has written in this letter that "unless we destroy at least a company bringing the supplies to Khopoli, we shall not be able to strike terror in the hearts of the British. They will not come to their knees unless we cut off all their supplies. I have intended to cut to pieces one whole company bringing in the supplies."[102]

From the 15th of March upto the 1st of April 1781, there were three or four encounters between Parashurambhau's cavalry and the escorting companies, which accompanied the British supplies from Panvel to Chowk and further to Khopoli. In the first encounter on the 16th March at Chowk, a British convoy on its way from Panvel to Khopoli was halting at Chowk. The escort of the British consisted of the 5th battalion of the Bengal and the first of the Bombay sepoys and Kandahar horse. Parashurambhau assaulted this escort suddenly with a force of nearly 15 thousand horse and foot. Captain Mackay who commanded the British escort, repulsed the repeated Maratha onslaughts by his good exemplary conduct and military skill. But one company of sepoys belonging to the Bengal battalion which had routed a party of Maratha

horse and pursued it too eagerly and incautiously, was suddenly encircled by the Marathas. Raghunathrao Patwardhan attacked the left flank of this company, while Meghashyam Bapu[103] attacked the right flank and Balvantrao attacked the centre. The Patwardhans killed nearly fifty to hundred British soldiers and looted some guns. Balavantrao, who sustained a minor injury, distinguished himself. Balavantrao and Raghunathrao then made a night-attack on the escort. The Maratha cavalry, aided by the Pendharis, plundered 300 to 400 oxen, ammunition and a huge quantity of grains. Amidst the Maratha attacks, Captain Mackay advanced a few miles and having been joined by a reinforcement, which Goddard had sent to Khopoli, arrived safely in the camp on the 17th March.

In this encounter, the Marathas had taken positions on a small hillock formed by huge stones and rocks. Their cavalry was of no use. The British protected themselves behind the piles of stones. On the Maratha side, Ranoji Thete and Madhavrao Shendage were killed.

There was another encounter between the two sides in the last week of March 1781. Parashurambhau got intelligence that some English troops went to Chowk from Khopoli and halted there to collect supplies and bring them back to Khopoli. Raghunathrao sent Balavantrao to Chowk and he himself remained near Khopoli keeping some guards on route to Khopoli from Chowk. When the British escort proceeded from Chowk at mid-night, Raghunathrao pursued it and threw rockets on it. There was confusion in the British camp. Immediately the

Pendharis and other plunderers from the Maratha side entered into the British camp and took away two thousand oxen, three camels, six to seven carriages and some ammunition. The British troops advanced to Barwai. In the Barwai pass, the Maratha cavalry attacked the advancing British troops from the rear, in which ten men from the British side were killed and injured. The Marathas again looted some guns and oxen. Hariharrao Patwardhan's Pendharis looted some more oxen. Next day the British troops halted at Barwai.[105]

The British escort consisted of three to four companies and six or seven pieces of artillery. There was a pond at Barwai. The British started firing from their artillery pieces by taking positions near the pond. Due to this firing some five to six men were killed and some horses were injured on the Maratha side. Parashurambhau and Raghunathrao were acting in union at Barwai. When the British established their camp there, Parashurambhau retired back to Chowk by keeping Raghunathrao on the front of the British army at Barwai. At midnight the British forces started their advance from Barwai. The Marathas pursued them and plundered some oxen. Panvel was eight to ten miles from Barwai. The Marathas encircled the British and threw rockets in their direction. Some rockets set fire to the store of ammunition, in the British camp. There was a loud explosion which killed a number of British horses and oxen. Those who survived, managed to reach Panvel. The Marathas then retired to their base camp.[106]

Goddard was thinking that the Marathas would not venture to detach any considerable reinforcement into the Konkan. Contrary to his expectations, however, Tukoji Holkar descended the Ghats with his whole force and joined Parashurambhau.[106-a] This made the return of the convoy sent by Goddard very difficult and dangerous. Goddard, therefore, wrote to the Bombay Committee to send an additional force from Bombay to join Major Brown at Panvel and proceed with him to Khopoli. He further informed the Committee that he would relinquish his post at Khandala very soon.[107] The Bombay Council complied with his request and sent a party of 800 men to Major Brown, Goddard's nephew, at Panvel.[108]

When this party joined Brown at Panvel on the 11th April 1781, he marched from Panvel to Khopoli on the next day.[109] The news of these movements reached the Marathas. Brown had left Panvel at night. Raghunathrao Patwardhan, Vasudeo Dhonddev and Bhavani Patil (brother of Shahaji Bhonsale of Akkalkot) attacked the rear of Brown's troops, which consisted of nearly 1000 men. On the front side of the enemy Appaji Damodar, Balajipant Appaji, Piraji Kadam and Ramji Patil took positions. The Marathas showered rockets from the two sides. Then the Pendharis and plundering squads carried away some bullocks, camels, six carriages, some utensils and nearly forty guns. On the Maratha side, Manakoji Chopade received a shot on his leg, while his horse was killed. Brown came to Barwai and encamped there. There was a water tank at Barawai, which only supplied water. The Marathas, two days

before Brown halted there, had destroyed it.[109-a] Brown left Barwai on the 13th. Immediately Parashurambhau took his position on the front, while Tukoji Holkar camped at the rear of Brown's troops. Tukoji's cavalry attacked the rear of Brown's troops. Some forty to fifty men from the English side were injured. As Brown was going through a difficult terrain, Parashurambhau's men could not direct their rockets properly. Brown, sustaining attacks on his rear and front, halted two miles ahead of Chowk. On the 14th April, he left that place for Khopoli. Parashurambhau and Tukoji then moved to his rear. Balawantrao's cavalry attacked the British. In the thick of the fight that followed, the Marathas suffered twenty horses and men injured. Balavantrao received a minor injury on his forehead.[110] The total loss on the British side in all the encounters of Major Brown's contingent with the Marathas amounted to 18 killed and eight wounded, including five officers viz. Captain Bowles, Lieutenant Wheldon and Tindal of Bombay, Ensign Gibbings of the Madras and Ensign Richardson of the Bengal establishment. Major Brown reached the Khopoli camp on the 14th April.[111]

Due to constant harassment of the Marathas in his rear, it became difficult for Goddard to receive supplies from Panvel with the result that there was scarcity of grains in his camp. The Vasai rice was sold at six to seven seers a rupee in his camp. One bundle of grass cost one rupee. Consequently, some of his soldiers deserted him.[112] As the rainy season was approaching near, Goddard was thinking of

removing his camp as early as possible. Under such circumstances, he received two letters, one from Sir Eyre Coote from Madras and the other from the Governor General and Council from Calcutta. The tone of both these letters was that when Haidar had brought the British power on the verge of extinction, it was wrong on the part of the Bombay Company not to come to accommodation with the Marathas. Sir Eyre Coote even went to the length of writing that the Bombay Company and Goddard should accommodate with the Marathas on any terms they might propose and join them to the British side to act against Haidar or to at least secure their neutrality.[113]

Due to all these circumstances, Goddard decided to put his army in motion at once. He removed his camp from the summit of the Ghat to Khopoli before the 20th April. On the 20th he marched from Khopoli and encamped at Khalapur. When Haripant Phadke came to know of this, he also came with his select bands and some cannon to Khalapur.[114]

Goddard had intelligence that Haripant Phadke had joined Parashurambhau with some light field pieces. He realised that the object of the Marathas was to attack and harass him as much as possible on his march and attempt to carry off the baggage etc. So Goddard took every precaution to defeat this purpose.

He accordingly marched at day-break on the 21st and having sent all the baggage with a part of the army securely through a narrow pass that was close to the rear of his camp

and through which the road lay, prepared to follow with the rear division, when the Marathas began an attack by the discharge of artillery and rockets.[115] Haripant and Tukoji were on the front of Goddard's unit. A number of men were injured on both the sides[116] in the encounter that ensued. However, Goddard's troops reached Chowk soon.

The principal efforts of the Marathas were directed against the rear of Goddard, though from the nature of the country through which Goddard passed and the thick jungle, deep hollows and broken ground which effectively covered the Marathas from sight, they found means to annoy the line on the flanks as Goddard advanced and could retire in safety as the English parties moved out to dislodge them from their lurking places.

The Maratha guns remained at a considerable distance in the rear, where their cavalry also kept aloof in large bodies, generally out of the reach of the British shot, so that almost the whole of the action on the Maratha side was carried on by their infantry. This was evident from the small number of their casualties in proportion to those who were wounded on the British side. The Maratha footmen, though above four thousand, did not attack in any regular manner or appeared in large bodies, but were dispersed in small parties in the gullies and hollow ways which intersected the whole of the country and proved exceedingly favourable to their mode of warfare.

The Marathas had seven pieces of artillery in the field, two of which belonged to Holkar. A very brisk and constant

fire of artillery and musketry was kept on the British troops by the Marathas. From the reports of his spies, Goddard estimated the enemy losses as 200 killed and about twice that number wounded. The British loss amounted to 28 killed and 267 wounded out of which 200 belonged to Bengal troops. Lieutenant Colonel Parker of Bengal infantry, Captain Sambers of Bombay Native Infantry and Lieutenant Gibson of Madras Artillery were killed in the action of the 21st April.[117] According to the Maratha estimate, 19 British officers were killed in this encounter.[117-a]

On the 23rd, Goddard advanced from Chowk. When he was on march on the Chowk-Barwai road, a little after sunrise, the Marathas made their appearance in small parties, throwing rockets and discharging their masketry shots upon the rear, from the numerous thickets and hollows that favoured their approach. The Marathas had nearly 30,000 to 40,000 men, of which 6,000 were footmen. They showed themselves lining the tops of the hills on the right and left and behind every bush. Their horse kept behind their guns and generally at too great a distance for the British artillery to reach them.[118]

The most serious and determined attack launched by the Marathas was the one when Goddard came near Barwai. In the beginning, Parashurambhau and Tukoji Holkar attacked the rear of the British troops as they came near Barwai. The Gardis, the Rohillas and the footmen on the Maratha side fought courageously. Then followed the Huzarat, the Peshwa's

army, which showered shots after shots and rockets on the British till they reached Barwai. In this encounter, nearly twenty soldiers from Parashurambhau's troops were killed and a hundred wounded. Added to these were wounded and killed of the Huzarat and Holkar's troops.[119]

When Goddard's rear was pressed hard by the Huzarat, Holkar and the Patwardhans, he took possession of a hillock with the 6th battalion of Bengal and the 13th of Bombay infantry. This hillock effectively commanded the spot where the Marathas had posted themselves. Goddard's troops with their guns, drove off the Maratha soldiers from their hiding places, inflicting upon them considerable losses. Then the whole army of Goddard reached Barwai at about 10 o'clock. Goddard made a brief halt there to refresh the troops, then prosecuted his march ahead and arrived at Panvel an hour before the sunset on the 23rd April 1781. In the action that took place on the 23rd, 30 men were killed and 142 were wounded on the British side.

After Goddard reached Panvel safely, the Maratha sardars, Haripant Phadke, Parashurambhau Patwardhan and Tukoji Holkar stationed themselves near the Borghat for a short period and then moved in the direction of Pune.

The second Borghat expedition leads us to certain generalizations which are important from the military point of view. Firstly, it made clear that unless the base of a pass is controlled, the pass has no strategic advantages. General Goddard, therefore, took care to keep his headquarters at

Khopoli at the foot of the Borghat. He was also careful in not losing his hold on Khopoli and not moving eastward to the plains until his line of supply was intact. When he found that it was difficult to maintain the supply line at the foot of the Ghat, he took the right decision of turning back to the base, instead of moving forward towards Pune. Secondly, the expedition showed that the Marathas had realised the importance of Khopoli as the main key to the Borghat (even though they failed to make proper defence arrangements there for protecting Pune). They succeeded in breaching the line of communication between Panvel and Khopoli and thus prevented the latter place from becoming a depot of ammunition and grains. This had the desired effect. Goddard was forced to descend down the Ghat. This was a strategic partial victory for the Marathas. Their victory was not complete because of the superior artillery of the British and the unfavourable ground for the Maratha cavalry to make swift movements. If Goddard could not score a victory, he could at least make a safe retreat to Panvel. The Marathas could not surround him on all sides as they had surrounded the British troops at Vadgao in 1778-1779.

Thirdly, the second Borghat expedition demonstrates that the location and the situation of the Borghat was favourable to the Marathas as they possessed the upland and were in a better position to rush down the Ghats to envelop the base of the Borghat. The British did not enjoy such advantages. The terrain thus definitely helped the Marathas in forcing

Goddard's retreat. The only difficulty for the Marathas was that they could not utilise their cavalry to the maximum advantage due to the hilly region.

Fourthly, the second Borghat expedition clearly shows the signs of degeneration in the mode of warfare of the Maratha army. The veteran Maratha commanders like Tukoji Holkar and Parashurambhau employed the services of the Pendharis on a large scale to harass the enemy's rear. Though the Pendharis played an important role in forcing the retreat of Goddard, their employment in the Maratha armies cannot be justified. The Pendharis were mere mercenaries and looters without any army discipline, fighting qualities or high principles. Their introduction in the Maratha armies was bound to lower the standard of the latter ~~or~~ in future. During the second and the third Anglo-Maratha Wars, the Maratha armies had inwardly become mass of disorganized elements, even though outwardly they displayed European type of discipline. This hastened the downfall of the Marathas.

It is a current belief that the first entry of the Pendharies in the Maratha armies took place at the end of the 18th century. But the unpublished records from the Deccan College relating to the second Borghat expedition clearly show that the Pendharis were employed in the Maratha armies as early as in the period of the first Anglo-Maratha War, if not earlier.

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It is supposed that after the retreat of Goddard from Khopoli to Panvel the conflict between the English and the Marathas on the Konkan front came to an end. However, this supposition has been proved to be incorrect by the unpublished Marathi records in the Menavali Daftar of the Deccan College, Pune. These Marathi records show that even after Goddard's retreat, the Marathas kept on fighting till the end of the year 1781.

Before Goddard returned to Bombay from Panvel, he and the Bombay Council considered the Maratha military strength to be too weak to start any aggressive movements against the British arms. Nana Phadnis, however, entertained altogether different ideas. In consultation with Haripant Phadke and Parasharambhau Patwardhan, he evolved a plan to send small units or bands of Maratha cavalry to the region extending from Panvel upto Thane and Vasai. This plan was chalked out in March 1781 and it came to be implemented before Goddard's retreat from the Borghat. Nana's plan was not a large-scale offensive against the British. However, it was a small counter-offensive, carrying war in the enemy's camp with a view to bringing psychological pressure on him (enemy) and compel him to sue for peace. Nana's calculation was that the major bulk of the British army having been engaged in fighting with the Marathas at the Borghat, the Maratha bands would have to face very little opposition in executing his plan.

The fort of Kohaj was one of the commanding and guarding forts of Vasai and its adjacent territories. As discussed

earlier in this chapter, a detachment of Goddard's troops had captured the fort of Takmak on the 23rd January 1781 and besieged the fort of Asheri. Goddard was at that time advancing towards the Borghat. There were rumours in the Maratha camp that Goddard's troops were going to attack the fort of Kohaj also.[121] So in order to counteract the British moves, Haripant Phadke immediately despatched Pandurangpant Godbole with some troops to the rescue of the Kohaj fort.[122] When Pandurangpant's contingent approached near the Kohaj fort, some of the British troops, with the assistance of the local fishermen, made a sudden ambush. Due to this sudden raid, Pandurangpant's soldiers ran away in all directions in confusion. Pandurangpant himself, with a few of his chosen men, succeeded in entering the Kohaj fort. The British troops plundered bag and baggage of the Marathas and they reached very near the Kohaj fort, hotly pursuing Pandurangpant. They attacked the 'Lower Māchī' of the fort, captured it and established there a strong guarding post, thus blocking the main entrance to the fort.[123]

When the above incidents were taking place, in February, 1781, Parashurambhau Patwardhan's camp was in the vicinity of Khopoli near the Borghat. He informed Nana Phadnis about the blockade of the Kohaj fort by the British. Nana Phadnis ordered Parashurambhau to send the contingents of the Bhonsales of Akkalkot and the Joshis of Baramati as reinforcements to the Kohaj fort. But the Bhonsales and the Joshis refused to go to Kohaj unless they received advance money for making

payments of wages to their soldiers. Thereupon Parashurambhau wrote letters to Nana to send additional money. Nana had no money to spare. Under such circumstances, one and half month was wasted in correspondence.[124] This is a good example showing how the hold of the Pune Government over its feudal sardars was becoming weaker and weaker. It also shows how the selfish tendencies of the Maratha sardars were getting the better of their love for Swarajya.

The British troops outside the Kohaj fort erected batteries on its lower Machi and started firing at the main fort by means of their artillery pieces. Mahadaji Raghunath, who was the commandant of the fort, and Pandurangpant Godbole wrote urgent letters to Nana Phadnis to send reinforcements.[125] By then the month of March of the year 1781 had started. Nana Phadnis, with great difficulties, collected one thousand Gardis and despatched them from Pune to Kohaj. But before they reached the Borghat, two hundred of them deserted the Maratha side. Realising that the Gardis were not reliable, Parashurambhau despatched his own one and half thousand horsemen, five hundred Gardis and the remaining Gardis from Nana's Gardi contingent under the command of Balaji Vishwanath Phatak and Trimbakrao Gangadhar to raise the siege of Kohaj.[126]

It may be recalled here that Balaji Vishwanath Phatak had successfully cut off the British line of communication and supplies in the rear during the first Borghat Expedition. He was also one of the Maratha commanders who had been sent by Nana Phadnis to raise the siege of Malanggad in 1780.

Balaji Vishwanath immediately advanced from the vicinity of the Borghat in the first week of April 1781 and he reached at the foot of the Kohaj fort on the 7th April. When Pandurangpant Godbole, who was inside the fort, came to know of the arrival of Balajipant Phatak, he started firing from the cannon on the 'Upper Māchī' at the British troops on the 'Lower Māchī'. In response to this, Balaji Vishwanath assaulted the British troops from outside. As the British soldiers were caught between the frontal and rear attacks, they immediately dispersed in all directions. Thus the fort remained safe in the Maratha hands. This incident took place on the 7th April, the very day on which Balaji Vishwanath reached at the base of the fort. In this small encounter the Marathas inflicted a good number of casualties on the enemy by more accurate stone-throwing. They plundered some weapons, two trumpets, two 'abadāgirs' and four horses.[127]

Balaji Vishwanath's cavalry soldiers hotly pursued the British troops. In the pursuit some of the British soldiers were killed and wounded. One detachment of the British troops entered the fort of Manor, which is situated about six miles to the N.W. of the Kohaj fort. Observing this, Balaji Vishwanath's forces attacked the fort of Manor and brought it into their possession.[128] But before they could capture it, the British troops had left it and entered the port of Manor.[129] This part is situated on the banks of the Vaitarana river. Here, one British military officer, by name Anderson,

had established a chowki or a guard post for the protection of the port. In this guard post, one Jamadar, two Havaldars, two Naiks and twenty sepoys were guarding the port. When the Marathas arrived on the outskirts of Manor pursuing the British contingent, Anderson himself was out of station.[130]

The strength of the British contingent which took shelter of the port of Manor was five hundred, out of which two hundred were fishermen (Kolis) and the remaining were regular sepoys. The detachment under Balaji Vishwanath was composed of five hundred Maratha horsemen. Soon a battle ensued between the two sides.[131]

When the British troops started advancing towards the port of Manor, the plunderers on the Maratha side (Marathi word lugāre) hastily made a frontal attack on them. But they had to retreat before the onslaught of the disciplined sepoys on the British side. Then Balaji Vishwanath himself advanced with the forces at his command. But before they could reach near the British troops, the latter had crossed the Vaitarana river to reach its opposite bank. After crossing the river, they straightway went to Anderson's guard post and established their positions in its vicinity with readiness to defend themselves. Balaji Vishwanath could not make a frontal attack on the enemy because the river Vaitarana was flowing between the two rival parties, standing on the opposite banks of that river. So the Marathas hurled their rockets (agnibānās) on the enemy positions. But as these rockets were misdirected, they fell beyond the enemy positions

and were wasted. Besides, the British troops had an advantage of a strong cover.[132]

The Marathas then found a fording place where they could cross the river easily to the other side. Seeing this, the British troops left the guarding post and headed towards the bank of the river. In the creek of Vaitarana, four British ships were anchoring at Manor. The British forces started running in the direction of these ships. Realising this the Marathas pursued them and came close to their heels. There was a minor engagement between the two sides. When the fighting was on, all of a sudden the British soldiers turned their faces and tried to run away in another direction. But the Maratha horsemen, who were on the hunt, blocked their way. Thus finding themselves surrounded on two sides, all the British troops jumped into the river Vaitarana and they tried to swim over to the other side of the river. They tried to by-pass the ships which were landing in the port of Manor and swim ahead to the other bank. The Marathas were not ready to let slip their catch through their hands. Instantly, Pandurangpant Godbole, Govind Ramchandra, Appaji Ramchandra and a good number of horsemen from the Maratha side entered the river and slaughtered a good number of enemy soldiers. Some of the British soldiers were drowned in the river while swimming. Very few succeeded in crossing over to the other side of the river. Nearly two hundred British soldiers were either killed or wounded in this encounter. This garrison stationed at the Manor guard-post

also suffered heavy losses. The Marathas suffered thirty to forty casualties in killed and wounded and their two horses were drowned. In the thick of the fight, Pandurang-pant Godbole, Govind Ramchandra and Appaji Ramchandra, who had entered deep into the river-water, were on the point of being drowned by the force of the current of the river. But luckily they were saved. In the encounter at Manor, the Marathas carried away more than a hundred small guns and more than a hundred other weapons. A good number of British weapons were drowned in the river. The Manor incident took place on the 8th April, 1781.[133]

On the same day Balajipant Phatak collected his men together, entered the village of Manor and set fire to its market place. There was thirty to forty khandis of rice in the port of Manor. The rice-bags were also set on fire by Balajipant's soldiers. Three British ships out of the ~~four~~ four anchoring in the port of Manor were also burnt to ashes. After these achievements, Balaji Vishwanath returned to the Kohaj fort.[134]

The English records do not give detailed information regarding the Anglo-Maratha encounter at Manor. A letter dated the 10th April 1781 written by the English authorities at Vasai to the Bombay Council, makes the following brief reference to the Manor incident - "We are concerned to acquaint you that late last night intelligence was sent by Lt Gore in command at Mahim that at noon of the preceding day a body of Maratha cavalry had entered the paragana of Manor

and totally routed a party of one Jamedar, two havaldars, two naiques and 20 sepoys left by Mr. Anderson for the protection of the village of Manore which he quitted on the 31 ultimo after a residence there of near a month without the smallest alarm."[135] In another letter dated the 12th April 1781, the British officers at Vasai informed the Bombay Government that out of the total number of British sepoys posted at the Manor guard-post, one havaldar, one jamadar, two naiques and thirteen sepoys reached Vasai safely.[136] It is surprising that the English letters do not make a mention of the British troops which ran away from the Kohaj fort to take refuge in the port of Manor. It is still more surprising when these English records give wrong information. In the letter of the 12th April mentioned above, it is written that the Marathas did not attempt to cross the Vaitarana river for pursuing the British sepoys in the watch-post at Manor.[137] This shows that those British sepoys who safely reached Vasai from Manor, deliberately made a false report to their officers about the encounter at Manor in order to hide their discomfiture at the hands of the Marathas.

After his return from Manor to Kohaj, Balaji Vishwanath Phatak was quiet for a short period. In the first week of May 1781, he renewed his activities. He stationed all the Gardis under his command in the village of Gorhe,[138] which is situated about three miles to the S.E. of the Kohaj fort. Then taking with him select troops, he came on the bank of the Surya river. This river flows north-south near the town

Palghar in ~~the~~ Thane district. Mahim is situated at a distance of about five to six miles from this river. The Marathi records do not pinpoint the spot on the bank of the Surya river ~~at~~/which Balaji Vishwanath arrived. After his arrival on the bank of the Surya river, Balajipant gave out that he was to go to Tarapur,[139] but actually he marched towards Mahim.[140] The inhabitants of Mahim, however, had somehow got preintimation of Balaji's arrival. They had hurriedly left that place and taken shelter in the fort of Mahim. They had shifted their bag and baggage to some other place by ships. Balaji Vishwanath entered the market place of Mahim. The British garrison in the Mahim fort opened fire on his troops. As Balajipant had entered Mahim only for plunder, he had no equipment with him to silence the British guns. In retaliation, he set fire to the village of Mahim and carried away some booty and cattle with him. This incident took place on the 6th May 1781.[141]

Before the Mahim incident took place, Balaji Vishwanath had started friendly talks with the Koli Raja of Javar in order to capture Gambhirgad[142] and the fort of Segava[143] from the British. The King of Javar sent Krishnajipant Gokhale and Bakshi with some troops to help Balajipant. Balaji Vishwanath sent Gokhale and Bakshi to Gambhirgad and Segava forts, while he himself went to the fort of Tandulwadi.[144] He attacked the British guard-posts in the forest of that fort and drove away the British troops stationed in these posts. Hearing of Balaji Vishwanath's assault on the

Tandulwadi fort, the British garrison on the nearby Segava fort ran away. Already Krishnajipant Gokhale's troops had besieged the Segava fort. When the British garrison on that fort made good its escape, Krishnajipant's forces brought the fort in their possession. Balaji Vishwanath had adopted the policy of making use of the Koli ruler of Jawar against the British.[145] Whether the Marathas retained the forts of Gambhirgad and Segava with the ruler of Jawar or took them into their own possession is not known from the available records.

After capturing the forts of Gambhirgad and Shegava, Balajipant concentrated his attention on recapturing the fort of Takmak which was in the British possession since January 1781. About the recapture of Takmak fort Balaji had not received any instructions from the Pune Government. In this respect he was acting on his own. He assigned the task of recapturing the Takmak fort to Madanrao Yerunkar and Gangadharpant. Madanrao and Gangadharpant made a surprise assault on the Takmak fort and easily recaptured it. Balaji Vishwanath provisionally appointed Madanrao Yerunkar to look into the administration of that fort and he returned to the village Gorhe.[146]

At the end of the year 1781, the Maratha troops posted at Mahim and Manor stormed the forts of Tandulwadi and Kaladurg[147] and conquered them from the British.[148]

The Maratha counter-offensive of 1781 under the leadership of Balaji Vishwanath Phatak was not a major offensive

against the British. Still the Marathas reaped some benefits from it. As Balaji Vishwanath carried fire and sword in the British territories round about Thane and Vasai, the crops in these territories were destroyed on a large scale, and there was an appreciable fall in the land-revenue income of the British. Thus Balaji Vishwanath was successful in bringing a sort of economic and psychological pressure on the Bombay Government.[149] Balaji Vishwanath's counter-offensive was one of the factors which led the Bombay Government to give up its adamancy and start negotiations of peace with the Marathas, which ultimately culminated into the treaty of Salbai of 1782.

Throughout the first Anglo-Maratha War, the British were on the offensive and the Marathas on the defensive. Balaji Vishwanath's counter-offensive is the only exception in which the Marathas tried to carry war in the enemy's camp in a systematic way. That is why it is important from the strategic point of view.

After Balaji Vishwanath's counter-offensive came to an end at the end of 1781, the hostilities between the Marathas and the British came to an end in the Konkan region. Soon peace negotiations started between the two sides resulting in the treaty of Salbai of 1782. With this treaty, the first Anglo-Maratha War came to an end.

Notes

1 The Mahuli hill-fort is 15 miles to the east of Vajreshwari, Taluka Shahapur, District Thane.

2 Hill fort 45 miles to the east of Kalyan in Thane district. Actually it is on the border of Pune and Thane districts.

3 Cannot be located on the map.

4 S.P.D.D. No. 23, pp. 277-78.

5 Ibid., pp. 327-332.

6 Sir Eyre Coote, born in 1726, was the fourth son of Rev. Dr. Chidley Coots. He entered the British army in 1745, went to India in 1754 with the 39th regiment and became Captain on June 18, 1755. Part of this regiment was included in the force despatched from Madras to Bengal in 1757 against the Nawab Siraj Uddaula, after his capture of Calcutta. Coote was present at its (of Calcutta) recapture, at the taking of Chandranagar and at the victory of Plassey on June 23, 1757. In 1759, he was gazetted Lieutenant Colonel of the 8th regiment and to command the troops in Madras. In the war with the French under Count Lally, he took Wandiwash in November 1759. He rose to the post of Major General in 1775 and to that of Lieutenant General in 1777. He succeeded General Clavering as a member of the Supreme Council at Calcutta on March 24, 1779. He scored some victories against Haidar Ali in 1781 (D.I.B., p. 93; D.N.B., Vol.IV, pp. 1083-86).

7 Haidar Ali was a party to the Quadruple Alliance which was formed in the middle of 1779 among the Nizam, the Pune Government, Mudhoji Bhonsale of Nagpur and Haidar against the British. As per the task assigned to him by this Alliance, Haidar declared war against the English at Madras, invaded Karnatak in June 1780 and defeated Colonel Bailies at Perambakam.

8 Edward Hughes: Born about 1720: Entered the Navy, 1734-35; War at Porto Bello in 1739: At Cartagena (1741): At Toulon (1743-44): Captain 1747-48: Naval C-in-C. in the East India, 1773-77: Rear Admiral and K.C.B. 1778 (D.I.B., pp. 209-210).

9 S.P.D.D. No. 23, pp. 350-53.

10 Ibid., pp. 360-61.

11 Khandoji Bhonsale was the second son of Mudhoji Bhonsale and the grandson of Raghuji Bhonsale of Nagpur.

12 Nagpur Affairs, Vol. I, Introduction, pp. XXVIII-XXIX.

13 S.P.D.D., No. 24, p. 6.

14 Ibid.,p. 33.

15 Ibid., p.24.

16 A.L., Vol. 7, L.Nos. 2572, 2573, 2574.

17 This campaign has been discussed in detail by the late V.S.Khare in A.L. Vol. 7 on pp. 3463 to 3478.

18 Raghunathrao Patwardhan was the eldest son of Nilkanthrao Patwardhan, who died in the battle of Moti Talav and the cousin brother of Parashurambhau Patwardhan.

19 A.L., Vol. 7, L.Nos. 2570, 2573.

20 Tukoji belonged to the fifth generation in the line of Malharrao Holkar's eldest son Mahadaji.

21 Ganeshpant Behere was a Brahmin Kamavisdar in the Surat Athavisi Paragana of Gujrat. Like many of the Maratha civil officers, he also led small army units. He was permanently stationed in Gujrat territories.

22 He was the Mamlatdar of Jambusar Paragana in Gujrat. He took the side of Raghoba and harassed the Peshwa's troops in Khandesh.

23 Chandrarao Pawar was the youngest son of Udaji Pawar. He sided with Raghoba and helped him a lot.

24 Ranale is about ten miles to the S.E. of Nandurbar in Nandurbar taluka of Dhule district.

25 A.L. Vol. 7, Nos. 2569 and 2574.

26 Ibid., L.No. 2574.

The Pendharis came to prominence in the later half of the 18th century. Their main way of subsistence was looting in which they were expert. The Maratha sardars and commanders of later Peshwa period employed them in their armies. The Pendharis always used to attack the rear of the enemy and loot his commissariat.

27 Dahivali is about 4 miles to the east of Karjat, Taluka Karjat, District Kolaba.

28 A.L. Vol. 7, L.No. 2574.

29 S.P.D.D. No. 24, pp.53-54.

30 Ibid., p. 67.

31 A.L., Vol. 7, L.No. 2580.

32 S.P.D.D. No. 24, pp. 67-69.

33 Dickinson's Report (M.D.D., No. 314, pp. 1153-54).

34 Dickinson's Report (M.D.D. No. 314, pp.1155-56).

35 Mahadaji Raghunath's full name is not known.

36 D.C.H.C., R.54: F-2: L.4; 54:1:447.

37 D.C.H.C., R.54-F-1:L-446.

38 D.C.H.C., R-54: F-2: L-6.

39 The village Bhastsai is about five miles to the S.W. of Shahapur in Shahapur taluka of Thane district.

40 D.C.H.C., R.54: F-1: L-445 (App. No. 79).

41 D.C.H.C., R-54: F-1: L.443.

42 This village is about 11 miles to the north of Karjat in Karjat Taluka of Kolaba District.

43 D.C.H.C., R.54: F-1: L-437 (App. No. 80).

44 D.C.H.C., R.54: F1: L439.

45 A.L., Vol. 7, L.No. 2578.

46 D.C.H.C., R-54: F-1: L-438 (App. No. 81).

47 Forrest,M.S., pp. 437-38.

48 D.C.H.C., R-54: F-1: L-448; R-54: F-1: L.438 (App.No.81).

49 Forrest, M.S., p. 436.

50 Umbarkhind pass is about 5 miles to the south of the Borghat and it descends into a village named Umbre in Pen Taluka of Kolaba district.

51 Cannot be located on the map.

52 D.C.H.C. R-54: F-1: L.484 (App. No. 82).
Actually there is no other route to the Borghat except via Khopoli.

53 Forrest, M.S., p. 436.

54 Jayavantrao Panase was the second son of Yashwantrao Laxman Panase and younger brother of Bhivrao Yashwant Panase.

55 D.C.H.C., R-54: F-1: L-466, 467 (App. Nos. 86, 87).

56 Forrest, M.S., pp. 436-37.

57 D.C.H.C., R-54: F-1: L.459, 467 (App. No. 87); Forrest, M.S., p. 437.

58 D.C.H.C., R-54: F-1: L-467 (App. No. 87); Forrest, M.S., p. 437.

59 Forrest, M.S., pp.436-37.

60 Ibid., p. 437.

61 A.L., Vol. 7, L.No. 2585.

62 Ibid.

63 D.C.H.C., R.80: F12: L3 (App. No. 102).

64 D.C.H.C., R.80: F40: L 2 (App. No. 113).

65 D.C.H.C., R80: F12: L10 (App. No. 97).

66 D.C.H.C., R.80: F12: L1 (App. No. 122).

67 A.L.,Vol. 7, L.No. 2592.

68 A.L., Vol. 7, L.No. 2585.

69 Ibid., L.Nos. 2583, 2584.

70 Ibid., L.Nos. 2586, 2593, 2590.

71 Ibid., L.Nos. 2585, 2586, 2593, 2590.

72 A village about 3 miles to the west of Vadgao and 3 miles to the south of Karla in Pune district.

73 D.C.H.C., R-54: F-1: L-423 (App. No. 94).

74 D.C.H.C., R-54: F-1: L.No. 389.

75 D.C.H.C., R-54: F-1: L.No. 408 (App. No. 105).

75-a A.P.Y., L.314, p. 281.

76 A.L. Vol. 7, L.Nos.2586, 2592.

77 Ibid., L.No. 2586; D.C.H.C., R-54; F-1: L.476.

78 A.L., L.Nos. 2582, 2583.

79 The Kolamba Pass is about twenty miles to the north of the Borghat.

80 A.L., L.No. 2596.

81 Ibid., L.No. 2599; D.C.H.C., R-90: F-1: L.53 (App.No.109); A.P.Y., L-311, p. 279.

82 Chowk is about 9 miles to the S.E. of Panvel in Kolaba district.

83 A.L., L.No. 2599.

84 D.C.H.C., R-80: F-12: L.No. 2; 80:12:L.3 (App. No. 102).

85 D.C.H.C., R-54: F-1:L-422 (App. No. 92).

86 A hill-fort, 6miles to the north of the Borghat in Pune district.

87 A hill-fort D.C.H.C., R-54: F-1:L-454 and 426 (App.No.96).

88 D.C.H.C., R-54: F-1: L-391.

89 D.C.H.C., R-54: F-1: L-387 (App. No.101).

90 A.L., Vol. 7, L.No. 2599.

91 S.P.D.D., No. 24, pp. 145-46.

92 S.P.D.D. No. 24, pp.108-110.

93 S.P.D.D. No. 24, pp. 90-91.

94 S.P.D.D., No.24, pp. 97-101.

95 A.L., Vol. 7, L.No. 2595.

96 D.C.H.C., R54: F1: L.Nos.452, 454.

97 S.P.D.D. No. 25, pp. 91-94.

98 Ibid., pp. 119-120.

99 Nagpur Affairs, Vol. 1, Introduction, pp.xxiii-xxxvi.

100 S.P.D.D., No. 24, pp. 158-160.

101 Forrest, M.S., pp. 441-42.

102 A.L.Vol. 7, L.No. 2604.

103 He was the son of Krishnaji Hari Patwardhan and cousin brother of Parashurambhau.

104 A.L., Vol. 7, L.No. 2605, D.C.H.C. R-90: F-1: L.67 (App. No. 115), S.P.D.D. No. 24, pp. 162-63.

105 D.C.H.C., R90: F1:L.84 (App. No. 118). Hariharrao was the second son of Parashurambhau Patwardhan. Hariharrao's family ruled the Jamkhandi State in Bijapur district.

106 D.C.H.C., R-90: F.1: L.84 (App. No. 118), A.L.Vol.7, L.Nos. 2612, 2613.

106-a A.P.Y., L.No. 327, p. 289.

107 Forrest, M.S., pp. 442-43.

108 Ibid., p. 444.

109 A.L. Vol. 7, L.No. 2618.

109-a D.C.H.C., R.90:F1:L.96 (App. No. 121).

110 D.C.H.C., R-90, F-1, L.94 (App. No. 123), 95; A.L. Vol. 7, L.Nos. 2616, 2618.

111 Forrest, M.S., p. 448; M.I.S., Vol. 12, p. 13.

112 A.L. Vol. 7, L.Nos. 2616, 2620.

113 Forrest, M.S., pp. 445-448.

114 A.L.Vol. 7, p. 3618.

115 Forrest, M.S., p. 451; A.P.Y., L.Nos. 318,319, pp. 283-84, 285-86.

116 A.L., Vol.7,L.2620.

117 Forrest, M.S., pp. 451-52, 454; M.I.S., Vol. 12, p.13.

117-a Aitihasika Patravyavahara, No. 212, p. 175.

118 ~~Ibid.~~ Forrest, M.S., p. 453.

119 A.L. Vol. 7, L.No. 2620.

120 Forrest,M.S., p. 453; Pune Akhbar, Vol. 1, A.R.No. 44, p. 121.

121 D.C.H.C.,R.48: F.2: L.22; R.54: F2:L.6.

122 D.C.H.C., R.54:F1:L.Nos.441 and 446.

123 A.L., Vol. 7, L.2618, p.3615.

124 Ibid.

125 D.C.H.C.,R.90: F1:L.70 (App. No.116).

126 A.L., Vol. 7, p. 3615.

127 D.C.H.C., R.90: F1: L.90 (App. No. 121).

128 A.L.,Vol. 7, L.2618, p. 3615. In this letter, the name of the fort is wrongly given as 'Manohar' instead of 'Manor'. This mistake is probably the result of incorrect reading of the original Modi word. In the whole of Thane district there is no fort named Manohargad. The description given in the Marathi letters regarding the creek and the port is applicable to Manor. The Deccan College historical records clearly mention that Balaji Vishwanath entered the port of Manor. Therefore, there is not the slightest doubt that the Marathas captured the fort of Manor and not Manohar from the British.

The old Portuguese records mention that the forts of Manor and Asheri were the two prominent forts of the

Portuguese in the north Thane district (Bombay Gazetteer, Vol. 14, pp. 228-229).

129 The port of Manor is situated on the bank of the Vaitarana river at a distance of about 20 miles from the sea. The Vaitarana, like the sea, has high and low tides in the port of Manor. During the normal high tides, the ships of five tons can enter the mouth of the creek of Manor. When the tides are extremely forceful, the ships of ten tons also can anchor in the port. Manor, which is five miles to the west of Palghar,has been frequently mentioned in the Portuguese records.

130 S.P.D.D., No. 24, pp. 201-202.

131 D.C.H.C., R.80: Fl: L.Nos. 33 and 34 (App. No. 120).

132 D.C.H.C., R.80: Fl: L.34 (App. No. 120).

133 Ibid.

134 Ibid., A.L., Vol. 7, pp. 3615-3615

135 S.P.D.D. No. 24, pp. 201-202.

136 Ibid., p. 203.

137 Ibid.

138 Ten miles to the west of the town Wada,Wada Taluka, District Thane.

139 Tarapur is ten miles to the N.W. of Palghar and about 24 miles to the N.W. of the village Gorhe in Thane Dist.

140 The port of Mahim is about 5 miles to the S.W. of Palghar in Thane District.

141 D.C.H.C., R.80: Fl: L43 (App. No.128).

142 Hill-fort, about 22 miles to the east of Dahanu in Thane District.

143 Hill-fort, about 16 miles to the east of Dahanu and 5 miles to the S.W. of Gambhirgad in Dahanu Taluka of Thane District.

144 Hill-fort, about ten miles to the S.W. of the Kohaj fort and ten miles to the S.E. of Mahim, Taluka Palghar, District Thane.

145 D.C.H.C., R.80: Fl: L.Nos. 42 and 39 (App. No. 130).

146 D.C.H.C., R.80: Fl: L43 (App. No. 128).

147 Kaldurg fort is situated about 8 miles to the N.E. of Mahim and about 6 miles to the west of Manor, Taluka Palghar, District Thane.

148 S.P.D.D., No.25, pp. 218-219; Pune Akhbar, Vol. 2, p.7.

149 Ibid., p. 203.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TREATY OF SALBAI

At the beginning of the year 1780, the third and the last phase of the first Anglo-Maratha War started. In this phase the war was not limited to the conflict between the British and the Marathas only. Due to the quadruple alliance among the Peshwa, the Nizam, Mudhoji Bhonsale and Haidar Ali, the Anglo-Maratha War became an all-India war, which was fought in the Konkan, Gujrat, Karnatak, Central India and Orissa. By the end of 1781, the hostilities between the Marathas and the British stopped temporarily. In August 1781, peace negotiations between the two parties began, which after prolonged discussions and hot debate, ultimately resulted in the conclusion of the treaty of Salbai in 1782, bringing to an end the first Anglo-Maratha War which lasted for eight years from 1774 to 1782.

It would be interesting to study the various circumstances leading to the opening of peace talks between the British and the Marathas culminating in the Treaty of Salbai. The quadruple alliance which came into existence at the end of the year 1779, brought all the major Indian powers together against the British. The British might then was not equal to the task of confronting four enemies on different fronts simultaneously. This compelled them to bow down and sue for peace.

On the Konkan front, the Peshwa's army adopted the

policy of assaults and raids avoiding pitched battles with the enemy. By cutting off the line of communication and supplies of the British troops in their rear, the Peshwa's commanders not only compelled general Goddard to abandon his plan of carrying an expedition to Pune but also rendered his position on the Borghat untenable and helpless. Ultimately, he had to retreat below the Ghats. But in his retreat also the Marathas inflicted on him ~~severe~~ some losses. The counter-offensive launched by the Marathas after Goddard's retreat to Panvel further added to the financial difficulties of the Bombay Government. As the Marathas carried fire and sword upto the region of Mahim, the British suffered from an acute shortage of money, food-grains and other supplies.

If the British military position in the Konkan was bad, it was none too good in northern India. No doubt the British troops under Camac and Muir registered some notable triumphs over the Marathas. They captured the important fort of Gwalher by surprising it and gave a set-back to Mahadaji's prestige. Besides, Colonel Goddard demonstrated to the native powers during his long march from Burhanpur to Surat that the British arms could penetrate any part of India at their will on the strength of their disciplined well-trained infantry and powerful artillery. In spite of these military feats, the over-all situation in north India did not offer bright prospects to the British interests. They were not able to score a single decisive victory against their formidable opponent, Mahadaji Shinde. When Mahadaji took

command of his army in Malwa in his own hands, the British forces were moving towards the plains of Sironj. Mahadaji attacked the British forces, defeated them and compelled them to take shelter in the fortress of Shivpuri Kolaras, nearly 75 miles from Gwalher.[1] In this fort the British defended themselves strongly and Mahadaji could not dislodge them from that site. If it appeared difficult for Mahadaji to capture the fortress of Shivpuri by frontal attack, it proved equally difficult for the English to involve the Marathas into a pitched battle and score a victory over them. The ganimī kāvā of the Marathas soon made the British realise that it was futile and a mere waste of time in pursuing the flying bands of the Marathas. Mahadaji was hoping that once the Peshwa's forces drove away Goddard's forces from the Borghat, he might be able to secure reinforcement from the Pune quarters. It was certain that after his military position was improved, he could win over to his side local allies and the patronage of the Mughal Emperor at Delhi. Mahadaji could not have been blind to the growing unpopularity and hatred for the English in north India, which was soon to explode in the famous Chet Sing incident, which nearly cost Warren Hastings his life. Mahadaji had kept correspondence with the local chieftains in the Antarveda.

When the quadruple alliance was in progress, Divakarpant Chorghade, the Diwan of Mudhoji Bhonsale of Nagpur, had promised Nana Phadnis of an invasion of Bengal. To keep this promise Mudhoji sent a large army under Chimnaji Bhonsale and

Bhavani Kalo towards Bengal. Though these two men proceeded towards Bengal via Orissa, the invasion of Bengal never materialised as Mudhoji was bribed Rs. 16 lakhs by Governor General Warren Hastings for withdrawal of his forces. Accordingly, Mudhoji withdrew his forces by accepting the bribe. Though the expedition of Chimnaji and Bhavani Kalo did not achieve anything positive, it had the negative effect of keeping Warren Hastings in fear and anxiety as long as Mudhoji's army was on the march.[2] From the beginning of 1780 till the middle of 1781, Warren Hastings was constantly in the fear of the Bengal invasion by Bhonsale's troops as he failed to understand the motives behind Mudhoji's outward professions of friendship and sending an army in the direction of Bengal. Hastings' anxiety is clearly expressed in his private writing (Hastings Despatch) when he argues and justifies his payment of Rs. 16 lakhs to the Bhonsale. "If the troops of Chimnaji had been driven to this extremity, a war must inevitably have ensued with the Government of Berar, more dangerous to our possessions in Bengal than in any in which we have ever been engaged since our acquisition of the Dewanny."[3] Out of this fear Hastings paid Rs. 16 lakhs to Mudhoji but this payment resulted in financial difficulties for the British, a result which finally made Hastings confirm his idea of starting peace negotiations through any channel.

The greatest pressure was brought to bear on the English by Haidar's attack on Madras. Haidar was a party to the quadruple alliance of 1779-80. Remaining true to his word

given to his allies, the Peshwa, the Nizam and Mudhoji Bhonsale of Nagpur, Haidar started his campaign against the British in July 1780. He swooped down the Arcot district, laid waste Tanjore, carried fire and sword throughout the Malabar coast, defeated Colonel Bailie and knocked at the very doors of Madras. Haidar's well equipped westernised infantry and the hoards of his horsemen shook the very foundation of the British power in India. The spectacular victories of Haidar compelled the British to divert some of their forces from the north and western India to the south. It was not so much the Maratha strength but Haidar's striking power which reduced the British pressure on Malwa and the western ghats. This was one of the major factors which made the British think of a truce with the Marathas.

As the East India Company had started a war on three fronts simultaneously, it soon began to feel the resulting economic strain. Even after seizing the islands of Sashti and Vasai from the Marathas, the Bombay Government was not able to balance its budget, which was the main aim of the Bombay Council in starting the war against the Marathas. The Council, for meeting its war expenditure was relying more and more on the over-drafts issued and sent by the Calcutta Government. So long as Haidar had not taken part in the war, the Calcutta Government could successfully meet the financial needs of the Bombay Government. But with the sudden entry of Haidar into the war, the expenses of the Calcutta Government increased. For raising additional battalians and bribing

different Maratha rulers like Mudhoji Bhonsale, Hastings had to withdraw additional money from the Government treasury. Besides, the Madras Government was on the verge of financial bankruptcy due to the mismanagement of Governor Rumbold. The Calcutta Government had to send financial assistance to the Madras Government. This brought a tremendous burden on the treasury of the Calcutta Government. The Charter Acts as well as the foul methods adopted by Hastings in extorting money from the Begums of Ayodhya and Chet Sing are an indication of the deteriorating financial position of the East India Company in India. Shortage of money was another important factor which compelled the British to discontinue the war with the Marathas.

There were certain other reasons, apart from the above realities, which forced Hastings to negotiate with the Marathas. The Court of Directors had become very anxious for establishing peace in their Indian settlement. They were constantly pressing the Governor General to conclude the war. As early as April 11, 1781, they issued clear instructions to the Calcutta Government that a peace with the Maratha Government was to be concluded at all events and the war was to be carried from the Bombay coast into the dominions of Haidar Ali.[4] A wave of popular opinion surged forward among the Englishmen in London that the East India Company should hold nothing beyond their present possessions in India. Hastings' friends were finding it difficult to maintain his credit at home unless he could bring the Maratha business to

a speedy termination. No wonder, one of his friends in London informed him: "it is impossible for you to conceive how all the moderate men here pant after a peace. Give them one in India, Sir, for the love of God and your own good fame."[5]

When Warren Hastings was about to start negotiations of peace with Mahadaji, things were taking a different turn in the south. The Peshwa received a letter from the Madras Government written jointly by Macartney, Sir Eyre Coote, Edward Hughes and Macpherson. They wrote to the Peshwa that they had received instructions both from the Company and the King of Great Britain that they should ensure friendship with him. It was also suggested that the terms of such a treaty would be ratified by the King and Parliament and it would not be altered by the Company under any circumstances.[6]

When in the summer of 1781, Hastings learnt of the severe disaster suffered by Goddard in his Konkan campaign and of the failure of Mudhoji to mediate and conclude a peace with Pune, he became extremely uneasy and hard pressed for funds. He proceeded to Benares in August with the double object of squeezing some money out of Chet Singh and opening direct negotiations with Mahadaji. He invited Divakarpant Chorghade, the Diwan of Mudhoji Bhonsale of Nagpur, for that purpose, but was disappointed to learn that Divakar had died just at this time.

Hastings' disappointment was further heightened by the rebellion of Chet Singh, which exposed him to imminent personal danger. In his sore need he thought of Colonel Muir,

then camping in Bundelkhand in the vicinity of Mahadaji Shinde and asked him to find out if Mahadaji could be induced to bring about an accommodation. On his part Mahadaji was not less anxious to extricate himself without humiliation from the vexatious war which had continued for the last seven years. So a kind of temporary truce was effected on the 13th October 1781 between Muir and Mahadaji. According to the terms of this armistice, the combatants were to withdraw within a week to their respective headquarters, Colonel Muir beyond the Yamuna river and Mahadaji to Ujjain. The war in Malwa was to be immediately wound up, Mahadaji was to mediate and arrange a peace first between the Peshwa and the English and secondly between the English and Haidar Ali. The Maratha territories in Bundelkhand conquered by the British were to be restored to the Peshwa together with the ruling chieftains who had gone over to the English.[7]

The retreat of Colonel Muir's forces beyond the Yamuna according to the armistice concluded with Mahadaji had an immediate effect on Goddard's position in the south. It did not leave him any excuse to continue his offensive policy against the Pune Government. Soon the Bombay Council authorised Goddard to conclude peace with the Marathas.' He deputed Captain Watherstone who had an intimate knowledge of Maratha policies, to bring about the desired peace.

While Captain Watherstone was trying to come to an understanding with the Pune Government, another feeler was sent by Hastings through Chapman, who was to act as deputy

in the court of the Bhonsales of Nagpur. Chapman was instructed by Hastings to try to strengthen the friendship and alliance already existing between the Company and Mudhoji and try to utilise his services as a mediator in bringing the British and the Marathas close to each other.[8]

Thus there were three agencies in the field working to arrange peace, Hastings through Captain Muir and Mahadaji, Mudhoji Bhonsale acting on the instructions of Hastings and Captain Watherstone, the trustworthy agent of General Goddard, directly approaching Nana Phadnis. Besides, the Madras Government was trying to bring peace through the mediation of the Nawab Muhammad Ali of Arcot.

Nana well understood the meaning of all these moves and tried to reap the highest advantage out of the confused situation of the British, now so impatient to avoid further ruin. He asked Mahadaji to hold out and protract the negotiations on the ground that no separate peace could be made without reference to Haidar Ali, who was their ally who had joined the quadruple alliance against the British. But this ruler of Mysore was not in a mood to yield as he was expecting the arrival of the French naval squadron so as to eradicate finally all the British power from the peninsula. He was already in possession of an enormous territory which he was loath to relinquish. All this was clear to Hastings at Benares, and he lost not a moment in concluding a final treaty through Mahadaji. For this purpose he prolonged his visit to Benares and sent his personal agent David Anderson with full powers to settle terms without delay on the basis

of Muir's truce.

Hastings was not sure that Anderson would succeed in his mission. He was afraid of Nana and Haidar Ali frustrating the project of peace; and as a second string to his bow he had already called up the two brothers Veniram and Vishambhar, the Nagpur agents, ever ready to execute Hastings' plans. He paid them a cash present of one lakh and a jagir in perpetuity of an annual yield of 25 thousand rupees. He thus despatched them to Nagpur with a request to Mudhoji to arrange a treaty with the Pune Government. Hastings' personal agent Chapman accompanied them. This step only served to create further complication and delay on account of the several agencies thus working simultaneously in different channels between Benares, Calcutta, Madras, Bombay and Pune.

Anderson was a capable diplomat and managed his mission with admirable skill and caution during the early months of 1782. Nana tried to have the whole subject of negotiations transferred to Pune where Watherstone had already proposed certain terms. He asked Mahadaji to visit Pune with Anderstone to attend the celebration of the young Peshwa's nuptials, which Nana now proposed to hold with a view to bringing together not only all the prominent Maratha chiefs but even Nizam Ali and Haidar Ali on special invitation and then conclude a treaty in a full assemblage. Haidar Ali was constantly warning Nana against a separate treaty. Nana's plan, therefore, was to impress upon the Indian potentates, the power and prestige of the Maratha State now gathering

strength under the aegis of the rising Peshwa Madhavrao II.

While this plan of Nana had much force in it, there was another equally powerful consideration put forth by Mahadaji. So long as peace was not finally concluded, the large forces collected for the war could not be disbanded. The British were strongly entrenched near Allahabad and there were not a few chiefs in the north ready to take advantage of any weakening of the Maratha position. The negotiations required frequent references to Warren Hastings who had planted himself near Benares and who after all had the final word on war or peace. Under such circumstances, Mahadaji refused to move to Pune urging that he was likely to secure better terms in the final settlement brought about in the militant atmosphere of the north, rather than amidst peaceful rejoicing of a marriage ceremony at Pune which Haidar Ali could not attend as his absence from the Karnatak would endanger his position. This is how ultimately the subject of the negotiations remained in Mahadaji's hand.

Although the preliminaries of the truce could be quickly adjusted, the settlement of the actual terms proved a long and vexatious process, not only because the settlement directly or indirectly affected most of the Indian powers owing to the widespread nature of the war, but also because constant reference between Mahadaji and Nana became necessary. The peace feelers started by Macartney and Goddard were quickly withdrawn and the business came to be handled solely by David Anderson and Mahadaji in a direct contact with Hastings.

Nana constantly insisted on two points which he communicated to Mahadaji through correspondence. The first was to get back all the conquests made by the British during the seven year's war, particularly, Sashti (Salsette), Vasai (Bassein) and parts of Gujarat that is Bhadoch and Ahmedabad, as the war was not provoked by the Marathas. The other was the inclusion of Haidar Ali in the negotiations and conclusion of the treaty. These two and other points with proposals and counter proposals were discussed in detail by Anderson and Mahadaji for full four months. The restoration of the conquered territories proved to be a very tough subject for settlement. A genuine good-will, respect and friendship soon came to be developed between Anderson and Mahadaji and much vexation was removed. While heated discussions and conferences were the order of the day throughout the period, there was at the same time no lack of the civil exchange of dinners and entertainments between these two chiefs. Hastings after giving full liberty to Anderson to win over Mahadaji by all possible means, returned to Fort William in February 1782.

When Mahadaji urged Anderson that no separate treaty could be settled without the consent of Haidar Ali, Anderson asked him to give the terms of Haidar Ali for peace. As Haidar was not ready for peace, Mahadaji could not put forth his (Haidar's) conditions. The only alternative for him was to continue the war. In that case also he had some difficulties which he communicated to Nana. Mudhoji Bhonsale and the Nizam,the two main parties of the quadruple alliance,

were not ready to act against the British. Under such circumstances, he himself would have to undertake an expedition against Bengal, for which he had neither the equipment nor the funds. He wrote to Nana that if the latter provided him with an amount of about Rs. 15 lakhs, he could undertake an expedition to Bengal; if not, it was better to close the bargain on the best terms he could obtain. Mahadaji was afraid that if the major part of his army entered Bengal, Hastings would spare no pains in instigating the local rulers of Bundelkhand and Rajputana against him and his jahgirs and other territories in north India would be exposed to the effects of these rulers. As Nana himself was in a tight corner financially, he at last gave consent to Mahadaji's view of effecting a bargain as advantageous as possible in the prevailing circumstances.

Thus after months of tiresome discussions and endless correspondence, a final treaty was concluded and signed by Mahadaji and Anderson at Salbai, twenty miles south of Gwalher, on the 17th May 1782.[9] The treaty was ratified by Hastings at Fort William on the 6th June following, but signed by Nana Phadnis much later on the 24th February 1783, after Haidar Ali was dead. The salient features of this treaty were as follows:

The English were to deliver to the Peshwa all places including Vasai, captured by the English during the war except the island of Sashti and the smaller ones near Bombay. The city of Bhadoch was to remain with the English. The Maratha territories conquered in Gujrat by the British were to be

restored to the Peshwa and Gaikwad to whom they had belonged. The English were hereafter not to support Raghoba. Raghoba was to choose his residence and a pension of Rs. 25,000 per month from the Peshwa for his maintenance. Fateh Singh Gaikwad was to remain in possession of the territory he had before the war and was to serve the Maratha State as heretofore. The Peshwa engaged himself to make Haidar Ali relinquish the territory he had recently seized in the Karnatak. Both the English and the Marathas engaged not to molest each other's allies. The English were to enjoy the privileges of trade as before, but the Peshwa engaged not to allow support to any other European nation. Mahadaji Shinde took the responsibility for the proper observance of the conditions of the treaty. Territories granted to the English by Raghoba were to be restored to the Marathas. Bhadoch was to be conferred upon Mahadaji Shinde by the British as a token of his friendly disposition towards the English.

The treaty of Salbai forms an important landmark in the political history of India. It would be interesting, therefore, to observe different assessments made by different English and Indian writers before making a critical evaluation of the terms of the treaty. Keene was certainly exaggerating the effects of the treaty when he wrote "it was by means of that treaty that without annexing a square mile of territory, the British power became virtually paramount in the greater part of the Indian peninsula, every province of which with the exception of Mysore, acknowledged that power as the great

universal peace-maker."[10] Vincent Smith was less sweeping in his observations than Keene when he wrote that this treaty did not only assure peace with the formidable power of the Marathas for twenty years but "marked the ascendency of the English as the controlling, although not yet the paramount government in India." Lt. Colonel Luard comes nearer to truth when he says that the treaty "formed the turning point in the history of the English in India." He further adds that "it established beyond dispute, the dominance of the British as a controlling factor in Indian politics, their subsequent rise in 1818 to the position of the paramount power being an inevitable result of the position gained by the treaty of Salbai."[11] Warren Hastings took a modest view when he described the treaty as "a successful negotiations of peace .... in the most desperate period of my distresses."

According to Gense and Banaji, the treaty of Salbai was a clear acknowledgement of failure for the English. "The phrase annexing a square inch of territory", they wrote, "smacks of historical travesty in the light of the appalling territorial and political sacrifices which the Governor General consented to make." "Territories," Gense and Banaji continue further, "acquired by conquest or treaty were restored; indemnities which the Pune Darbar had promised to pay by the treaty of Purandar were written off; the treaty formally acknowledging the Gaikwad's political independence was torn up like a scrap of paper; Fateh Singh Gaikwad reverted to his pre-war state of quasi-vassalage; the Marathas attacked

the British shipping with impunity.... Yet we are asked to believe that by the treaty of Salbai the British power became virtually paramount in the greater part of the Indian Peninsula."[12] As the late G.S.Sardesai has put it, "the English tried their hands against the Marathas and suffered a set back from which they found it difficult to recover their position."[13] Shri Shanti Prasad Varma depicts a one-sided picture when he remarks "During the period under review, (1772-83 A.D.), they (the British) directed considerable energy at the subjugation of the Maratha Empire. In this effort they signally failed; the Maratha Empire emerged stronger in 1783 than what it was in 1772. In 1783, with the solitary exception of Salsette and its adjacent islands, the English had to restore every inch of territory they had acquired during the course of a long and nerve-wrecking war. The English had also to accept unequivocally a demand in clearest terms by Mahadaji Sindhia and Nana Phadnis that the Bombay Presidency, which was mainly responsible for raking up all the trouble in the preceding years, was to be rendered so utterly humbled and powerless that it might not be in a position to threaten the Maratha security again."[14]

A close examination of these different assessments by various writers of the treaty of Salbai reveal that they are one-sided and partial. The English writers, thinking in terms of the pride of the British empire, conclude that the British emerged triumphant, while the Indian writers having sympathy for the Marathas, take exactly the opposite stand.

It would be better, therefore, if we critically evaluate the treaty by assessing the relative gains and losses of the two contending parties in the light of certain objective principles. These principles would be: firstly, relative territorial and financial gains of the two parties; and secondly, relative success of the parties concerned in achieving their political objectives in starting the war and thirdly, to determine which party gained the upper hand at the table of negotiations.

From the territorial point of view, the Marathas recovered almost all this territory conquered by the British during the course of the war. But they permanently lost to the English the island of Sashti together with its dependencies. The loss of Sashti meant loss of the annual revenue of Rs. 6 lakhs. It not only meant loss of trade to some extent on the western coast, but also the loss of prestige. It was a pity that the island for the loss of which the Marathas fought the war, was not restored to them. The acquisition of Sashti island meant addition of Rs. 10 lakhs in the Bombay Government's treasury. Due to the acquisition of that island, its trade also was bound to prosper.

From the English point of view, there was no question of any loss of territory. Whatever territories were exchanged in the treaty of Salbai were the Maratha territories which the British had conquered. The British had carried the war in the enemy's camp. The territories that were looted, plundered or pillaged, belonged to the Peshwa. There is not a single clause in the treaty which provides for the compensation to

to the Marathas either in lieu of the damages done to the Maratha territories or the expenses the Marathas had to incur due to the war which was thrust on them by the British.

Nana had urged upon Mahadaji to make a specific provision in the treaty of granting to the Marathas the payment of the Chauth of Bengal. But the Bhonsales of Nagpur, the real sufferers in respect of Chauth, had remained silent over the claim for more than quarter of a century and displayed an unedifying want of nerve, so that Mahadaji could not revive the lost cause and a claim long dead. Thus the Marathas lost the claim of Chauthai which Raghuji Bhonsale I had established by his valour. That was a great financial loss to them. On the other hand, the British got free hand in the political and financial affairs of Bengal.

The only solace for the Marathas was that Hastings agreed to allow Mahadaji an entirely free hand in managing the affairs of north India, particularly of the Emperor of Delhi. Though a clause to that effect is not included in the treaty of Salbai, it is included in the truce which Mahadaji entered into with Captain Muir on the basis of which the treaty of Salbai was concluded.

In discussing the success of the political motives of both the parties, it is worth remembering that it was the Bombay Government which ignited the flames of the first Anglo-Maratha War. Right from the year 1773, after the murder of Narayanrao Peshwa, the Bombay Government, incited by Thomas Mostyn, was dreaming of overthrowing the Barbhai Government

at Pune and reinstate Raghoba as the regent of the minor Peshwa Madhavrao II. This would have virtually given free hand to the British in directing the internal and external policies of the Maratha State through their puppet Raghoba. Also it would have been easy for them to reduce or overpower the different Maratha sardars like the Shindes, the Holkars, the Bhonsales and the Gaikwads. In this bid the British utterly failed. No doubt they succeeded in winning the friendship of Mudhoji and Mahadaji while concluding the treaty of Salbai, but they could not alienate them from the Maratha political system. In the treaty they had to acknowledge indirectly that the Pune Government was a sovereign authority of the Maratha State. Fateh Sing Gaikwad had been persuaded, pressed or cajoled to entering into treaty relations with the English during the course of the war. But in the treaty of Salbai, the English were forced to agree to his being completely restored to his traditional position of subordination in the pattern of Maratha political alignment. The only satisfaction the English could derive in weakening the Maratha confederacy was that Mahadaji was made the mutual guarantee for the perpetual and invariable adherence of both the parties to the conditions of the treaty.

If we minutely examine the articles of the treaty, we find that they were dictated by the British, not by the Marathas. The situation before the treaty of Salbai was more favourable to the Marathas than to the British. Haidar Ali had brought the British at Madras to their knees. The French

naval and military force was on its way to help Haidar and his allies. Many local rulers in India like Chet Singh were displeased with the British power. The British forces at Khandala were suffering hardships. Under such circumstances, Hastings had become too eager to establish peace ~~to~~ in India. If Mahadaji had correctly read the Indian political situation, he would have been able to secure better and more advantageous terms from the British. At least he could have demanded restoration of Sashti and Bhadoch and compensation for war expenses. On the other hand, Warren Hastings, when he was in a weaker bargaining position, saved the English nation from utter ruin, by his skilful political moves.

He not only saved England but also gained Maratha alliance against Haidar Ali. Mahadaji lost his ground when he meekly submitted to the British pressure and excluded Haidar Ali from the treaty. This was a grave political mistake. Even though Haidar was a traditional enemy of the Marathas, he was a native enemy whose power was limited only to the south. On the contrary, the East India Company was a foreign power, having well drilled armies and powerful artillery, which had created various pockets in different parts of India. In Bengal and Ayodhya, the British had demonstrated what mischief they were capable of playing with the native powers. They had subdued the French power. During the first Anglo-Maratha War, they had shown their real political motives by dividing the different Maratha rulers and assisting Raghoba. Mahadaji ought to have known that the main rival of the Marathas

in establishing the Maratha hegemony over India was the British power, not Haidar Ali. Mahadaji should have either continued the war or secured more advantageous terms from the British. At least he should have made Haidar a party to the treaty as Nana was insisting. Nana had to bow before Mahadaji and he ratified the treaty.

The method of the Marathas in carrying out the negotiations was faulty. Nana should have informed Hastings that the person whom he deputed for carrying on negotiations with the Marathas should be directly sent to the Pune court and not to Mahadaji. Direct negotiations with the Pune Darbar would have brought better results from the point of view of the Marathas. But the Central Government of Pune was so weak that it could not insist on direct negotiations. The last clause of the treaty confers the Jahgir of Bhadoch on Mahadaji. This shows that the power of the Marathas was divided at two centres, one at Pune and the other at Gwalher. The very fact that the treaty was concluded with Mahadaji and not with the Pune court, shows the helplessness of the latter and shrewdness of Hastings.

A sort of competition between Nana and Mahadaji proved detrimental to the interests of the Marathas while concluding the treaty. No doubt they outwardly cooperated with each other while carrying on negotiations with the British. But each of them wanted that he should be a dominating figure in the Indian politics and have credit for the conclusion of the treaty. Both had divergent views regarding the British and Haidar.

Mahadaji was lenient to the British and harsh to Haidar. Nana on the other hand, had a soft corner for Haidar and stern attitude towards the British. The gift of Bhadoch to Mahadaji by the English shows why they approached him first in carrying on negotiations for the treaty.

By the treaty, the British enjoyed the sole right and privilege in the Maratha country at the exclusion of the other European powers. The British, however, did not give the Marathas the exclusive right to trade with them, nor did they give their consent to the recovery of arrears from Fateh Sing Gaikwad by the Peshwa. This shows how Mahadaji failed in making the British agree to even the legal right of the Marathas.

The treaty of Salbai was a turning point in the history of India in the last quarter of the 18th century. Before the commencement of the first Anglo-Maratha War, the de facto power of the Peshwa was supreme over a large part of India. However, the treaty of Salbai marked the gradual ascendancy of the British power and the decline of the Maratha Government. Apparently, the Marathas emerged as victors in this war. But it proved to be a hollow victory. The deaths of Mahadaji Shinde and Nana Phadnis in the next few years dealt a fatal blow to the Maratha power. The British wrested power from the Marathas in the first two decades of the 19th century. The roots of this liquidation of Maratha power can be traced to the Treaty of Salbai.

Notes

1 H.P.M.S., L.No. 140.

2 Nagpur Affairs, Vol. 1, Introduction, p. XXXVII.

3 Ibid., pp. XXXIV-XXXV.

4 Foreign Department, Secret Proceedings, 2nd January, 1782. Letter to Bombay Select Committee of 26th December 1781.

5 B.M.Add. Mss. 29, 149, Price to Hastings, 1st June 1781. (Extract taken from S.N. Sen's Anglo-Maratha Relations, p. 196).

6 Forrest, M.S., p. 461.

7. Aitchison, Treaties, Vol. 4, p. 36.

8 Foreign Department, Secret Proceedings; Hastings to Chapman, 12th November 1781.

9 The full text of all the 17 articles of the treaty is appended to this Chapter.

10 Madhav Rao Sindhia (Ruler of India Series), p. 82.

11 Cambridge History of India, Vol. 5, p. 271.

12 The Gaikwads of Baroda, Vol. III, Introduction, XIII-XIV.

13 New History of the Marathas, Vol. III, p. 119.

14 A Study in Maratha Diplomacy, pp. 388-89.

APPENDIX II

ARTICLES OF THE TREATY OF SALBAI (1782 A.D.)

Treaty of perpetual friendship and alliance between the Hon'ble the English East India Company and the Peshwa Madhavrao Pandit Pradhan, settled by Mr. David Anderson, on the part of the Hon'ble Company, in virtue of the powers delegated to him for that purpose by the Hon'ble the Governor General and Council appointed by the King and Parliament of Great Britain to direct and control all political affairs of the Hon'ble English East India Company in India; and by Maharaja Soubahdar Madhavrav Sindia, as Plenipotentiary on the part of the Peshwa Madhavrav Pandit Pradhan, Balaji Pandit, Nana Phadanvis, and the whole of the Chiefs of the Maratha nation, agreeably to the following articles, which shall be ever binding on their heirs and successors, and the conditions of them to be invariably observed by both parties.

ARTICLE I

It is stipulated and agreed to between the Hon'ble the English East India Company and the Peshwa, through the mediation of Madhavrav Sindia, that all countries, places, cities, and forts, including Bassein, etc., which have been taken from the Peshwa during the war that has arisen since the treaty settled by Colonel Upton, and have come into the possession of the English, shall be delivered upto the Peshwa; the territories, ports, cities, etc., to be restored,

shall be delivered in within the space of two months from the period when this treaty shall become complete (as hereinafter described), to such persons as the Peshwa, or his Minister Nana Phadanavis shall appoint.

ARTICLE II

It is agreed between the English Company and the Peshwa, that Salsette, and three other islands, viz., Elephanta, Karanja, and Hog, which are included in the treaty of Colonel Upton shall continue for ever in possession of the English. If any other islands have been taken in the course of the present war, they shall be delivered up to the Peshwa.

ARTICLE III

Whereas it was stipulated in the fourth article of the treaty of Colonel Upton "that the Peshwa and all the Chiefs of the Maratha State do agree to give the English Company, for ever, all rights and title to the city of Broach, as full and complete as ever they collected from the Mogals or otherwise, without retaining any claim of chauth, or any other claims whatsoever, so that the English Company shall possess it without participation or claim of any kind;" this article is accordingly continued in full force and effect.

ARTICLE IV

The Peshwa having formerly, in the treaty of Colonel Upton, agreed, by way of friendship, to give up to the English

a country of three lakhs rupees, near Broach, the English do now, at the request of Madhavrav Sindia, consent to relinquish their claim to the said country in favour of the Peshwa.

ARTICLE V

The country which Sayaji and Pattesing Gaikwar gave to the English, and which is mentioned in the seventh article of the treaty of Colonel Upton, being therein left in a state of suspense, the English, with a view to obviate all future disputes, now agree that it shall be restored; and it is hereby settled that if the said country be a part of the established territory of the Gaikawar, it shall be restored to the Gaikawar; and if it shall be a part of the Peshwa's territories, it shall be restored to the Peshwa.

ARTICLE VI

The English engage that, having allowed Raghunathrav a period of four months from the time when this treaty shall become complete to fix on a place of residence, they will not, after the expiration of the said period, afford him any support, protection, or assistance nor supply him with money for his expenses; and the Peshwa on his part engage, that if Raghunathrav will voluntarily and of his own accord repair to Maharaja Madhavrav Sindia, and quietly reside with him, [redacted]um of Rs. 25,000 per month shall be paid him for his [redacted]nce, and no injury whatever shall be offered to him [redacted]wa, or any of his people.

ARTICLE VII

The Hon'ble English East India Company and the Peshwa being desirous that their respective allies shall be included in this peace, it is hereby mutually stipulated, that each party shall make peace with the allies of the other, in the manner hereinafter specified.

ARTICLE VIII

The territory which has long been the established jaghir of Sayaji Gaikawar and Fattesing Gaikawar, that is to say, whatever territory Fattesing Gaikawar possessed at the commencement of the present war, shall hereafter for ever remain on the usual footing in his possession; and the said Fattesing shall from the date of this treaty being complete, pay for the future to the Peshwe the tribute as usual previous to the present war, and shall perform such services, and be subject to such obedience, as have long been established and customary. No claim shall be made on the said Fattesing by the Peshwa for the period that is past.

ARTICLE IX

The Peshwa engages, that whereas the Navab Hyder Alli Khan having concluded a treaty with him, hath disturbed and taken possession of territories belonging to the English and their allies, he shall be made to relinquish them; and they shall be restored to the Company and the Navab Mahamed Alli Khan. All prisoners that have been taken on either side

during the war shall be released, and Hyder Alli Khan shall be made to relinquish all such territories belonging to the English Company and their allies, as he may have taken possession of since the ninth of Ramzan in the year 1181, being the date of his treaty with the Peshwa; and the said territories shall be delivered over to the English and the Navab Mahamed Alli Khan within six months after this treaty being complete; and the English, in such case, agree that so long as Hyder Alli Khan shall afterwards abstain from hostilities against them, and their allies, and so long as he shall continue in friendship with the Peshwa, they will in no respect act hostilely towards him.

ARTICLE X

The Peshwa engages, on his own behalf as well as on behalf of his allies, the Navab Nizam Alli Khan, Raghoji Bhonsla, Syna Saheb Soubah, and the Navab Hyder Alli Khan, that they shall in every respect, maintain peace towards the English and their allies, the Navab Asoph-ul-Dowlah Bahadur, and the Navab Mahamed Alli Khan Bahadur, and shall in no respect whatever give them any disturbance. The English engage on their own behalf, as well as on behalf of their allies, the Navab Asoph-ul-Dowlah, and the Navab Mahamed Alli Khan, that they shall in every respect maintain peace towards the Peshwa and his allies, the Navab Nizam Alli Khan and Raghoji Bhonsla, Syna Saheb: and the English further engage on their own behalf, as well as on behalf of their

allies, that they will maintain peace also towards the Navab Hyder Alli Khan, under the conditions specified in the 9th Article of this treaty.

ARTICLE XI

The Hon'ble East India Company and the Peshwa mutually agree that the vessels of each shall afford no disturbance to the navigation of the vessels of the other; and the vessels of each shall be allowed access to the ports of the other, where they shall meet with no molestation, and the fullest protection shall be reciprocally afforded.

ARTICLE XII

The Peshwa and Chiefs of the Maratha State hereby agree that the English shall enjoy the privilege of trade, as formerly, in the Maratha territories, and shall meet with no kind of interruption; and, in the same manner, the Hon'ble East India Company agree that the subjects of the Peshwa shall be allowed the privilege of trade, without interruption, in the territories of the English.

ARTICLE XIII

The Peshwa hereby engages that he will not suffer any factories of other European nations to be established in his territories, or those of the chiefs dependent on him excepting only such as are already established by the Portuguese; and he will hold no intercourse of friendship with any other

European nations; and the English on their part agree that they will not afford assistance to any nation of Deccan or Hindustan at enmity with the Peshwa.

ARTICLE XIV

The English and the Peshwa mutually agree that neither will afford any kind of assistance to the enemies of the other.

ARTICLE XV

The Hon'ble the Governor General and Council of Fort William engage that they will not permit any of the Chiefs, dependents, or subjects of the English, the gentlemen of Bombay, Surat, or Madras, to act contrary at any place to the terms of this treaty. In the same manner, the Peshwa Madhavrav Pandit Pradhan engage that none of the Chiefs or subjects of the Maratha State shall act contrary to them.

ARTICLE XVI

The Hon'ble East India Company, and the Peshwa Madhavrav Pandit Pradhan, having the fullest confidence in Maharaja Soubahdar Madhavrav Sindia Bahadur, they have both requested the said Maharaja to be the mutual guarantee for the perpetual and invariable adherence of both parties to the conditions of this treaty; and the said Madhavrav Sindia, from a regard to the welfare of both States, hath accordingly taken upon himself the mutual guarantee. If either of the parties shall deviate from the conditions of this treaty,

the said Maharaja will join the other party, and will, to the utmost of his power, endeavour to bring the aggressor to the proper understanding.

ARTICLE XVII

It is hereby agreed that whatever territories, forts, or cities, in Gujarat were granted by Raghunathrav to the English, previous to the treaty of Colonel Upton, and have come into their possession, the restitution of which was stipulated in the seventh Article of the said treaty shall be restored, agreeably to the terms of the said article.

This treaty consisting of 17 articles, is settled at Salbai, in the Camp of Maharaja Soubahadar Madhavrav Sindia on the 4th of the month of Jemmadul Saany, in the year 1196 of the Hygera corresponding with the 17th of March 1782 of the Christian era, by the said Maharaja and Mr. David Anderson: a copy hereof shall be sent by each of the above-named persons to their respective principals at Fort William and Poona, and when both copies being returned, the one under the seal of the Hon'ble East India Company and signature of the Hon'ble the Governor General and Council of Fort William, shall be delivered to Maharaja Madhavrav Sindia Bahadur, and the other under the seal of the Peshwa Madhavrav Pandit Pradhan, and the signature of Balaji Pandit, Nana Fadnavis, shall be delivered to Mr. David Anderson, this treaty shall be deemed complete and ratified, and the articles herein contained, shall become binding on both the contracting parties.

(Written in the Marathi character by RAGUBHAU DIVAN)
"In all seventeen Articles, on the fourth of Jemmad-ul-Akher, or fifth of Jesht Adhik, in the Shuklapaksh, in the year 1182."

(Subscribed in the Marathi Character by MAHADJI SINDIA)

"Agreed to what is above written in Persian."

(Signed) DAVID ANDERSON

Witnesses:

(Signed) JAMES ANDERSON

(") W. BLAINE

(A True Translation)

(Signed) JAMES ANDERSON
Assistant to the Embassy

(Taken from Forrest, M.S., pp. 478-482).

CHAPTER IX

THE FIRST ANGLO-MARATHA WAR - A REVIEW

The preceding chapters of the present thesis were devoted to the analysis of the major battles fought on the Konkan and Gujrat fronts during the three different phases of the first Anglo-Maratha War. In this concluding chapter, however, an attempt has been made to make a critical review of all the three phases of that war simultaneously. This general review of the first Anglo-Maratha War not only leads to certain broad generalisations from the military point of view, but also reveals some of its special features.

As explained in the chapter II of this thesis, the first Anglo-Maratha War represented a clash between two modes of warfare, one based on trained and disciplined infantry backed by artillery, while the other on mobile cavalry, swift manoeuvres and harassment of the enemy by cutting off his lines of communication and supplies rather than fighting pitched battles. Both these modes of warfare proved useless in bringing about the decisive result of the first Anglo-Maratha War. The ganimī kāvā or the kūta yuddha of the Marathas, by its very nature, could tire out an enemy by its negative tactics, but it was incapable of crushing its military strength. On the other hand, the British guns and artillery were capable of crushing the enemy, but as they were not backed by mobile cavalry, the British troops could not pursue the Maratha cavalry bands, when their guns

had made a breach in the enemy lines and bring the war to a speedy conclusion. The first Anglo-Maratha War thus demonstrated that for a decisive victory in a war, a proper balance between trained infantry, artillery and cavalry is essential.

During the first Anglo-Maratha War, almost all the major battles were fought on the Konkan front. Out of the five major battles fought on this front and one in the Gujrat region, the Marathas won three - the battle of Talegao, the second Borghat expedition and the siege of Malanggad. The British won two siege battles - the siege of the fort of Sashti in 1774 and the siege of the fort of Vasai in 1780. The battle of Adas was evenly matched, as both the sides suffered heavy losses and still no decisive result came out of it. These respective victories of both the contending parties show that the Marathas won the battles against the British only when geographical factors favoured them. The plains of Talegao were suitable for the swift movements of their cavalry and the hilly and thickly wooded Borghat was very helpful to their ganimī kāva. Similarly, in the siege of Malanggad the natural impregnability of that fort made the British artillery ineffective. Contrary to this, in adverse geographical surroundings and situations such as during the sieges of the Sashti and Vasai forts, the ganimī kāvā of the Marathas failed and the British artillery and navy were successful. The loss of the forts of Sashti and Vasai by the Marathas indicated that the Marathas of the

later 18th century had lost their traditional skill in sigge-fighting.

A comparative study of all the three phases of the first Anglo-Maratha War reveals that the Marathas scored only a temporary success over the British during the War. Theirs was not a sound, convincing victory. They only succeeded in thwarting the British design to attack Pune and make Raghoba the Regent of Peshwa Madhavrao II. They definitely showed strength and vitality in defence when hard pressed, but they could not crush the British military power. The first Anglo-Maratha War did not put an end to the issue of supremacy in India in the later half of the 18th century, as neither the British nor the Marathas were the victors of the War. Even though the British had to retreat in the two Borghat expeditions and during the siege of Malanggad, their mode of warfare indicated the future trend of Indian politics. It was a sign of the future ascendancy of the British power and the decline of the Marathas.

Throughout the War, the British were on the offensive and the Marathas on the defensive. Twice nearly the whole of the British army had left Bombay and entered the Borghat to attack Pune. Very small force was then left to guard and defend Bombay. Even then the Maratha land and naval forces could not attack Bombay in spite of their vast resources in men,money and material. Let alone the attack on Bombay, the Marathas were neither able to capture an inch of the British territories nor were they able to recover any of the

territories they had lost to the British during the War on the strength of their arms. The recovery of these territories in the treaty of Salbai was a combined result of Haidar Ali's brilliant military feats in Karnatak and the general political atmosphere in India unfavourable to the British.

The so-called Maratha victories at Talegao, Borghat and Malanggad were negative victories. They did not prove that the Maratha army and its art of warfare were superior to those of the British. These victories were achieved by the Marathas by negative tactics like burning and ravaging their own territories and cutting off the supply lines of the enemy from a distance. They were never able to make frontal attacks on the British troops, make breaches in their ~~enemy~~ lines and rout them. In the second Borghat expedition, Goddard could successfully retreat to Panvel from Khandala. The Marathas were not in a position to force him to surrender. During the sieges of the Sashti, Malanggad and Vasai forts also, the Maratha troops sent by Nana for the rescue of these forts were unsuccessful against the besiegers.

The only chance the Marathas had of crushing the military power of the Bombay Government was at Vadgao in 1778-79. In the battle of Talegao-Vadgao, the Marathas had completely encircled the British forces. It was then within their hands to annihilate these forces. Of course this situation arose not because of the superiority of the Maratha arms, but because of the tactical mistakes committed by the British

commanders. Even so, the Marathas did not take advantage of these mistakes and let slip the golden opportunity of humiliating the Bombay army by allowing it to retreat towards Panvel.

The negative victories of the Marathas could never cause any intimidation in the English camp. This can be easily realised when the Maratha victories are compared with those of Haidar Ali over the English in 1780. The resources at Haidar Ali's disposal as compared to those of the Marathas were limited. But the victories he achieved over the English were, unlike those of the Marathas, positive victories. He took offensive, entered into the British territories, conquered as much of them as possible and knocked at the very doors of the Madras Government. The havoc wrought by him created such a terror in the British camp that all the three English Presidencies in India had to take cognizance of it and make a serious attempt to check the growing power of Haidar Ali. Hastings had to rush in his battalions from Calcutta to Madras and the Madras Government had to request Goddard and the Bombay Government to send their troops in Haidar Ali's territories. Haidar could achieve positive victories over the best of the British troops under Sir Eyre Coote. The Marathas, however, during the first Anglo-Maratha War, were never able to create the terror and awe in the British minds, which Haidar could create.

Haidar could score his resounding victories over the British because of three factors. Firstly, he struck a balance

between the traditional and new western mode of warfare. He had an infantry and artillery which were excellently built up by the French officers. At the same time he did not abandon his cavalry which gave mobility to his trained infantry. Secondly, Haidar being the chief commander of all his forces, there was unity of command in his army. Thirdly, he had a good civil and financial system to support him. If the Marathas had followed Haidar's methods, they too could have become a formidable power in the eyes of the British.

The negative tactics and the negative victories of the Marathas had their impact on the negotiations of the treaty of Salbai. Inspite of the retreats of the British troops from the Borghat in 1778-79 and 1781 and from the Malanggad fort in 1780, Anderson negotiated with Mahadaji at Salbai with an air of superiority complex, because Hastings had instructed him to impress upon Mahadaji the positive victories scored by the British over the Marathas at Sashti and Vasai. Mahadaji, even though the general political circumstances in India prior to the treaty of Salbai were anti-British and favourable to the Marathas, was under the pressure of an inferiority complex that he was not able to recover Sashti and Vasai by force of arms. It was on this point that Hastings scored over Mahadaji. He could make Mahadaji think that the British arms were superior to those of the Marathas. Due to this inferiority complex, Mahadaji could not bargain from the position of strength and allowed Sashti and its dependencies to remain in the British hands.

During the three phases of the War, the British navy co-operated with the land army. Because of a strong navy, the Operational Base of the British troops at Panvel remained too strong for the Maratha land and naval forces to challenge it. Consequently, the British troops could penetrate the interior defence of the Marathas and reach upto the Borghat at will. On the other hand, the Maratha navy remained inactive throughout the War. Nanasaheb Peshwa's shortsighted action of destroying Tulaji Angre's armada with the help of the British thus proved detrimental to the Maratha state. Because of their crippled navy, the Maratha commanders could never contain their enemy in his Operational Base. They could challenge him only after he reached his Advanced Base.

Most of the modern thinkers consider war as a science as well as an art. So far as the scientific aspect of war is concerned, the British troops were definitely superior to the Maratha forces. The Maratha infantry and cavalry lacked proper military training. A Maratha soldier never required to undergo regular drills, exercises and proper education in handling different types of weapons effectively as well as science of cartography. The Maratha map related to the first Borghat expedition included in this thesis (Chapter II, Map No. 8) shows how the Marathas were far behind the British and other Europeans in scientific knowledge of cartography. The British soldiers and officers, on the other hand, were given scientific training in different branches of military science. They had to undergo regular drills, exercises, marching, etc. The British gunners knew the technical know-how

of the science of manufacturing of the guns as well as handling them properly. The surveys of the territories between Panvel to Pune conducted by Captain Steuart and Torriano prior to the first Borghat expedition and the construction of a road in the Borghat region during the ~~first~~ same Borghat expedition by the British sappers and miners show the great advance made by the British in the sciences of mathematics, engineering and surveying.

The Marathas never really took to anything technical, partly because of their lack of scientific education and partly because they were unwilling to change with the times. Artillery was one of the arms they never became proficient in. The artillery department of the Marathas at Panipat was, therefore, manned by the non-Marathas under Ibrahim Khan Gardi. But what Kashiraj has to say about the gunnery of the Marathas is revealing. He has remarked in his Bakhar, "The Maratha guns being very large and heavy and their level not easily altered, their shots began to pass over our (Abdali's) troops."[1] Thirty years later, the Maratha gunnery had not progressed much. While describing the seven months' long siege of the fort of Dharwad by the allied troops of the British and the Marathas, Edward Moor wrote in 1794, "From the method of proceeding adopted by the Mahrattas, we are convinced they would not, with twenty guns against the present garrison, approach and breach Dharwad in seven years. A gun is loaded and the whole of the people in the battery sit down, talk and smoke for half an hour when it is fired, and if it knocks up a great dust, it is thought sufficient;

it is reloaded and the parties resume their smoking and conversation. During two hours in the middle of the day, generally from one to three, a gun is seldom fired on either side, that time being, as it would appear, by mutual consent, set apart for meals."[2] These are the remarks about the artillery department of Parashurambhau Patwardhan, who was one of the leading Maratha commanders during the first Anglo-Maratha War.

It is but natural that the poor marksmanship, lack of scientific knowledge and mathematical accuracy of the Maratha gunners made very little impression on the British commanders. In the battle of Talegao, the British military power was humiliated, but to their satisfaction, their gunners inflicted more casualties on the Marathas in killed and wounded than their own. The gunners of Bhivrao Panase and Haripant Phadke wasted their shots, which effected very little execution in the British columns. During all the phases of the first Anglo-Maratha War, the number of killed and wounded on the Maratha side was greater than that of the British. The credit for this goes to the British gunners and artillery staff who reserved their shots for the right moment and directed them at the right spots with mathematical precision.

In the production of weapons also, the Marathas made very little, if any progress. Ever since the period of Shivaji, guns had always been purchased either from the Portuguese or the English. Peshwa Madhavrao I established a cannon-ball factory at Ambegao near Otur in 1765-66 and another factory was established at Pune for manufacturing cannon.[3]

But their designs were out of date, standardization was lacking and the gun-carriages were so heavy and clumsy that they required sixty or more bullocks to pull them. Lighter mobile guns drawn by horses were not developed.

The Maratha cannons were never made of any precise calibre, but were cast indifferently by all diametres and the ball afterwards adopted to the bore. The Marathas never used cast shot, but those of wrought iron, hammered to any dimensions. The many angles, consequently, on the surface of the shot, in a very small course of service, destroyed the smoothness of the bore and the shots would never be fired with that precision that a cast cannon-ball of the British could.[4]

W. Egerton, in his book 'Illustrated Handbook of Indian Arms' has discussed about the Maratha arms on pp.113-120. He does not mention a musket used by a Maratha horseman. The Maratha cavalry mainly used spears and swords. The Marathas never tried to specialise in horse musketry, which would have proved useful against the Europeans.

Inspite of British superiority in the military science, the British troops could not force a decisive win over the Maratha troops in the first Anglo-Maratha War. The ultimate result of the War showed that the two sides remained evenly balanced. There were two reasons for this. Firstly, while the British forces displayed offensive and penetrative power on the strength of their superior infantry, artillery and havy, they lacked the sustaining power. Their resources in men, money and material were so limited that they were not in

a position to bear the strains of a prolonged war. On the other hand, the Marathas were psychologically trained for a prolonged war ever since Shivaji's period. They had patience required for waging such a war. Besides, they had vast resources in men, material and money. But as they lacked offensive power and ability to penetrate the enemy columns, they too could not force a decisive victory over the British. Thus the first Anglo-Maratha War showed that an army must have both offensive and sustaining powers from the military point of view to score a decisive victory in a war.

The other reason for the undecisive result of the first Anglo-Maratha War was that the Maratha and the British commanders who participated in the War were not first rate commanders. From the point of view of the Art of War, the performance of the commanders on both the sides was not without blemishes. Haripant Phadke, Parashurambhau Patwardhan, Mahadaji Shinde, Tukoji Holkar cannot be compared with Shivaji, Santaji, Dhanaji and Bajirao I. Similarly, Keating, Egerton, Cockburn, Hartley, Goddard cannot match Lord Clive or Arthur Wellesley in generalship. All these commanders violated some of the basic Principles of War. Consequently, they could win certain battles, but not the War.

The main defect of the Maratha commanders was lack of pre-planning. Throughout the War, it is found that they started planning their strategy after the enemy had entered deeply into their territories. They were not thinking in terms of War, but in terms of battles. They never had a plan to contain

the British forces in their own territories and not to allow them to enter their own territories.

The Maratha commanders never thought of a combined action of the army and the navy. They allowed the British vessels free access in the sea-waters.

One of the most important principle of war is the unity of command. However, during all the three phases of the first Anglo-Maratha War, different Maratha commanders seem to follow their own dictates. This had an adverse effect on their mobility. They had to lose the forts of Sashti and Vasai, because of the lethargic movements of Visaji Krishna Biniwale, Ramchandra Ganesh Kanade and others.

The Maratha commanders neglected such basic principles of war as to keep high the discipline and morale of the army and win over the sympathy of the local population in the theatre of war.

During the period of Shivaji and the Maratha war of liberation against Aurangzeb, the morale of the Maratha soldiers and the people had soared very high. During the last phase of the war of liberation, the Maratha people on their own gave a heroic resistance to the huge imperial army of Aurangzeb. Due to this heroic resistance, Aurangzeb failed in his mission of eradicating the Maratha power. The Maratha people as a whole turned the tide against the mighty Mughal empire by taking a counter-offensive against it. As against this, we find a totally different picture during the first Anglo-Maratha War. When the British army twice ascended

the Borghat and threatened Pune, the majority of the people residing in the Maratha capital had deserted it and Nana himself was ready to follow suit. A great decline had thus come in the Maratha character within only seventy five years after their war of liberation. This was because the Maratha society had forgotten Shivaji's high ideals of Swarajya and Swadharma.

The Maratha commanders like Shivaji, Santaji Ghorpade, Chimaji Appa and Peshwa Madhavrao I had maintained a high standard of discipline in their armies. After Peshwa Narayanrao's murder, the Pune Government became too weak due to Raghoba-Barbhai conflict to keep any hold on its feudal elements. Hence the gross indiscipline among the Maratha commanders, troops and the Gardis throughout the first Anglo-Maratha War. Introduction of the Pendharis in the Maratha armies and the ravages made by a good number of Maratha commanders in their own territories were clear signs of the future Maratha degeneration.

A few Marathi papers from the section 'Pāgās, Pathakās' etc.[5] in the Pune Archives reveal that the Maratha State took great care of the killed and wounded soldiers. These papers contain long lists of the killed and wounded Maratha soldiers and commanders during the last phase of the first Anglo-Maratha War and the expenses incurred on every one of them by the Maratha State as compensation.

The above papers also reveal that the Maratha State did not maintain its own commissariat department in its armies.

All the commissariat work was entrusted to a contractor who was known as 'Shetyā Bājār'[6]. He was assigned a temporary land grant. From the revenues of this land he was expected to make provisions and supplies to the Maratha army. This system of commissariat was defective. The contractor or the 'Shetya' had the monopoly of making supplies for the army. Naturally, he could keep his tight hold on the Maratha civil officers, commanders and the troops. The State could not check his malpractices. There would not be any regular supply of provisions to the army if the contractor did not work properly. The contract system of the commissariat was one of the reasons for the shortage of supplies and provisions in the Maratha camp during the first Anglo-Maratha War.

The Maratha State, instead of increasing its economic resources by constructive measures and building up its own commissariat department, resorted to plundering the enemy territories and taking loans from the moneylenders.[7] A state which too much depends on moneylenders and looting is bound to head towards economic bankruptcy.

Like their Maratha counterparts, the British commanders also committed certain grave mistakes. Their first mistake was that they did not realise the importance of the Line of Communications and Supplies. Brigadier General Gordon allowed a free access to the Maratha supplies and reinforcements by not capturing the three watch-towers on the north side of the Sashti fort. During the first Borghat expedition, Egerton descended the Ghat into the open plains of Karla and allowed

his line of communication in the rear to be cut off by the Marathas. Even a good commander like Goddard committed a mistake in not taking possession of the Kusur, Kolamba and Rajmachi passes near the Borghat and allowed the Maratha forces to descend via these passes to block his rear.

The second mistake committed by the British commanders was that they did not pay as much attention to the mobility of their armies as was needed. Their armies were encumbered with heavy baggage and equipment. Consequently, their marches and movements lost the elements of mobility and surprise. This gave the Maratha commanders ample time to plan their strategy. Besides, due to heavy bag and baggage, the Maratha horsemen got opportunity to isolate and plunder the British rear-guard. This resulted in unnecessary wastage of time and money.

The third mistake committed by the English commanders was that they too much relied on their fire-power and neglected the importance of cavalry. If they had a sizable cavalry unit, they could have pursued to advantage the gains achieved by their superior firing weapons and artillery.

During the first Anglo-Maratha War, we do not find any of the British commanders employing an effective technique for dealing with the hordes of Maratha horsemen. It was Arthur Wellesley (Duke of Wellington), who about twenty years after the first Anglo-Maratha War, found an answer with a line ~~of~~ formation. His supply lines were well organized to give him a long line into the heart of the enemy country and mobility once he got there.[8]

After taking a review of the first Anglo-Maratha War from various aspects, it would be proper to evaluate it from the point of view of Indian history.

The first Anglo-Maratha War provided the first and the last chance to the Indian powers of total expulsion of the British from India, as it was only during this war that they all united against the British. If the Bhonsales of Nagpur and the Nizam had played the roles assigned to them in the quadruple alliance satisfactorily, the British power would have been extinct in India in 1780-81 and the history of India might have taken a different turn. But the War proved that the Indian rulers were incapable of uniting against a common cause.

One of the most important effects of the first Anglo-Maratha War was that after the War the Maratha mode of warfare underwent a complete change. The first Anglo-Maratha War was the last war in which the Marathas fought with their traditional mode of warfare. Mahadaji Shinde, who was very much impressed by the 'rock-like infantry' of the British in the battle of Talegao of 1778-79, perceived the successes of troops trained on the French and English model and resolved to imitate them. Soon after the first Anglo-Maratha War, he set up drilled battalions, mostly of mercenary troops, who were non-Marathas, with the help of De Boigne and other European mercenaries. The other Maratha sardars like Tukoji Holkar and the Bhonsales of Nagpur followed his example. Thus the Marathas further reduced their great asset of swift movement. The result was

admirably summed up by Sir Thomas Munroe: "By coming forward with regular infantry, they gave us every advantage we could desire. They opposed to us men that never could be made so good as our own, from the want of a national spirit among their officers and of the support of European battalions; and they trusted the success of the war to the event of close engagements."[9]

The third battle of Panipat is supposed to have laid the foundation of the British rule in India by giving a rude shock to the Maratha power. However, considering the wide theatre of war, the part taken by all major Indian powers, various complicated issues involved as well as the number and nature of different battles fought, the first Anglo-Maratha War was much more comprehensive than the third battle of Panipat. Its impact on the future course of Indian history was also more far-reaching than that of the third battle of Panipat. At the end of the War, the British won over the alliance of the Marathas against Tipu which brought the latter's destruction and strengthened the British power. The British power was not successful in the War against the Marathas and other Indian powers. But it took measure of their strength and brought them to submission in the subsequent period.

During the War, the French power was already on the decline. The War gave a death-blow to that power, thus leaving no European rival to challenge the British domination on the Indian continent. Mahadaji's rise to power was but a temporary phase, which finally gave way to the British supremacy in India.

If the third battle of Panipat helped the British power to take roots on the Indian soil, the first Anglo-Maratha War paved the way for its political domination of India in future.

Notes

1. Sen, S.N.: Military System of the Marathas, p. 123.
2. Moor, A Narrative, p. 30.
3. Peshwas' Diaries, Vol. IX, pp. 333-335.
4. S.N. Sen, Military System of the Marathas,p. 120.
5. Ghadani Rumal No. 180, Bundle No: 1.(Vajoji Phadatare Pāgā).
6. Ibid.
7. D.C.H.C., R.80: F.3: L.23 (App.6); R.80: F.2: L.12 (App. 24); R.80: F.1: L.19 (App. 25).
8. Montgomery, A Concise History of Warfare, p. 229.
9. P. Mason, A Matter of Honour, p. 54.

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(b) One Maratha map in Modi script, relating to the first Borghat Expedition of 1778-79 (Menavali Daftar, Section XI.11).

(2) Documents from the Pune Archives, Pune:

(a) Papers Selected for Research - Rumal Nos. 18, 21, 22, 23 (See the App. Vol.)

(b) Parasnis Transcripts, bound volume Nos. 7, 8, 9 (See the App. Vol.)

(c) Papers from the Section 'Pāgās, Pathakās,' etc., Ghadani Rumal No. 180, Bundle No. 1 (Papers related to Vajoji Phadatare's Pāgā).

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APPENDIX III

A GLOSSARY OF OLD MILITARY WORDS AND TERMS USED BY THE MARATHAS

(Note: This glossary is based on the new original unpublished Marathi records consulted in the present thesis.)

Āḍa	A supporting wall (of a gate of a fort).
Āḍosarā	A Cover.
Āghāḍī	Front
Arābā	1. A war-cart. 2. Artillery-fire.
Bājāra	Commissariat.
Bāle Killā	A citadel
Bāṇā (Agnibāṇā)	A fire-rocket.
Bāṇadāra	One who discharged a fire-rocket.
Bāragīra	A horseman belonging to the cavalry maintained by the State.
Kaichī (Bāṇāchī)	A bundle of twenty-four sky-rockets.
Barakandāja	One who discharged musket-fire.
Barakandājī	Musket-firing.
Bārī	A defile.
Bātelā	A vessel of 50 to 500 khandis used by Kachis and Kharvis of Gujrat.
Bāterā	A battery for erecting a gun or cannon.
Begamī	Provision.
Beladāra	A stone-digger in an army camp.
Belāga Jāgā	Inaccessible position.
Bharatāḍa	Loaded with stores.
Binī	Front.
Binīche Swāra	Cavalry unit of an advanced guard of an army.

Ḍunage	Non-combatants in an army.
Burūja	1. A bastion. 2. A temporary wall built for taking cover.
Chāraṇāche Baila	Bullocks supplied by a wandering community (known as charana) to an army.
Chhabīnā	An advanced guard-fleet of the base-camp which watches the movements of an enemy.
Chhāpā ghālaṇe	To make a surprise attack.
Choradabyāne	Secretly, lying hid.
Chorapālatha	A secret watch.
Chowkī	A guarding post or centre.
Dāstāna	A store-house.
Dhamadhamā	A platform for erecting a cannon.
Ḍhāsaṇa	A cover for protection as also for making a charge while fighting.
Duḍoli galabata	A ship (galabat) having two masts.
Durokhā Shaha	To engage an enemy on two fronts.
Durokhī ṣhāla	Two pronged attack.
Farāsakhānā	A place where tents, carpets, mats, etc. are kept.
Faṭākaḍī	Quick firing cannon.
Fouja udhaḷaṇe	Dispersion of troops in all directions out of fear.
Foujechā bharaṇā	Numerical strength of an army.
Foujechā tāṇa basaviṇe	To bring pressure by military manoeuvres.
Foujechī chikāṭi basaviṇe	To bring pressure on the enemy by military manoeuvres.
Foujechī hālachāla	1. Manoeuvre. 2. Movement of an army.
Foujechī maṇḍaṇī	Deployment of troops on a battle-field.

Funkaṇye	Blowers of trumpets in an army.
Gaḍada	A cave-like hole.
Gaḍagā	a rubble-wall for taking protection.
Ganima (Galima)	An enemy.
Garanāḷa	A mortar or bomb-cannon.
Gasta	Patrolling.
Gata bāndhaṇe	Deployment of different army units on a battle-field.
Ghaḷaī	A furrow.
Goḷāgoḷī	An exchange of fire.
Golandāja	A gunner in the artillery department.
Golandājī	Artillery firing.
Goḷīchī mārṇī	Firing range.
Goṭa	A camp.
Guḍhe	Refugees.
Gurāba	A kind of sailing vessel, grab.
Halā	An attack, raid.
Halā māghārā firaviṇe	To repulse an attack.
Harola	Unit of an advance guard.
Hashama	Foot-men, infantry.
Hātaghāī	A close combat, hand to hand fight.
Hava gheṇe	To gather information.
Have	Men who gathered information.
Herebāre	Beating to windward, the tacking and turning of a ship under an adverse wind.
Himata	Morale.
Hulakāvaṇī deṇe	To deceive an enemy by skilful manoeuvres.

Hūla swāra	Front line horsemen of an advanced guard of an army.
Hulī laḍhāī	A mode of fighting which puts an enemy on the wrong track.
Jakaḍa basaviṇe	To bring pressure on the enemy positions.
Jamburā	A small kind of cannon.
Jangyā	Machicolations i.e. holes specially kept in a parapet wall of a fort through which to fire at the approaching enemy.
Jeǰāḷā	A long musket turning in a stand, a swivel.
Jhāṭapīṭa	A skirmish.
Jibī	A bastion built in front of the main gate of a fort.
Juja	A small action, a skirmish.
Kāgadī	A messenger.
Kaida	Discipline, order.
Kamaragā	1. Middle portion. 2. Middle section of an army.
Kāmāṭhī	Sweepers and cleaners in an army.
Kapitāna	Captain.
Karola	A horse-musket.
Karolī	Musket-firing by horsemen.
(Mulūkha) Kasta Karaṇe	To plunder.
Kaṭaka	1. A camp of an enemy. 2. An army.
Kāvā	1. Manoeuvre to deceive an enemy. 2. Strategem.
Kāvyādāvyāne	Either by strategem or by fighting.
Khāchaṇa	A small supporting wall.
Khaḍī Fouja	Standing army.
Khandaka	A trench.

Kirakoḷa māṇūsa	Non-combatants.
Koṭa	A small of a fort.
Koṭhī	A store-house.
Kūcha karaṇe	To march.
Kumaka	Succour.
Kusū	An enclosing wall.
Labāṇa	Grain, salt, baggage, etc. supplied by the people of Laman caste to an army.
Labedāra	Bag and baggage not useful for fighting.
Laḍate Galabata	A war-ship.
Laḍavaī māṇūsa	Combatants.
Lāga	Pursuit.
Lagaṭa karaṇe	1. To charge an enemy at short range. 2. To go near an enemy camp.
Lakaḍakoṭa	A stockade.
Lambīchhaḍī tofa	A long-range cannon.
Lashkarī manasubā	Military tactics.
Lashkarī saranjāma	Military equipment.
Laskar	1. Army. 2. Camp of an army.
Lugāre	Plunderers in the Maratha armies.
Māchaṇa	A wooden platform for erecting batteries.
Māchī	A trunk of a fort, a long and spacious part of a fort.
Māgavasodā	A person who collects news.
Māghāra gheṇe	To retreat.
Mahāgirī	A larger machava or ship.
Mātabara sāmāna	Heavy baggage.
Meḍhā	A temporary wall built of stones, wood, trees, earth etc.

Misalī	Positions fixed for different contingents to attack an enemy.
Moharā	A frontal attack.
Mohīma	An expedition, a campaign.
Morchā (Foujechā)	Positions taken by an army on a battlefield.
Morchā ubhāraṇe	To erect a battery.
Morchebandī	A blockade by erecting batteries.
Mukāma karaṇe	To encamp.
Nāhimata	Low morale.
Nāngarawāḍā	Anchoring of a ship.
Nasta	Mouth of a creek.
Nikaḍa karaṇe	To rush on an enemy.
Nimachā	A kind of sword.
Paḍakoṭa	The outer wall of a fort.
Pāīche mānūśa	Infantry, footmen.
Pāla	A Maratha war-ship having two or three masts.
Palaṭaṇa	1. A platoon. 2. A contingent of troops.
Pālatha	A watch.
Paledāra tofa	A long-range cannon.
Pāṇī gheṇe	To take bath after recovery from wounds in a battle.
Pāyadala	Infantry.
Pāyautārā hoṇe	To dismount (a horse).
Pichhāḍī	Rear.
Pradara	Metallic particles which sprinkle after the explosion of a cannon-ball.
Raṇagāḍā	A gun-carriage.

Rasada (Rasta)	Supplies.
Rasta beda karaṇe	To cut off supplies of an enemy.
Rāūta	A horseman, especially belonging to the Pagas maintained by the State.
Risālā	Cavalry.
Risāladāra	A cavalry officer.
Ritāḍa	Unloaded.
Saḍī Fouja	Fighting forces, combatants.
Safelī	A terrace of a parapet wall of a fort, a rampart.
Sāṭha dharaṇe	To take refuge.
Shaha	1. An engagement with an enemy. 2. Tactics.
Shatru Angāvara gheṇe	To receive an attack of an enemy in order to counter-attack at the right moment.
Shatrūsa dabāva pāḍaṇe	To bring an enemy under severe strain.
Shibandī	Garrison.
[illegible] karaṇe (shatrūsa)	To defeat an enemy, to bring an enemy to his knees.
[illegible]laka	A discharge at once of firearms, a volley.
Soṇḍa	A trunk or a projecting part of a hill.
Tabaka	A small ditch, moat.
Taḷa	1. Operational base. 2. Camp.
Talāvā	Reconoissance.
Tangachāī	Scarcity, shortage.
Tarāṇḍe	A big boat, a galbat.
Taṭa	A parapat wall of a fort.
Tāṭhamūṭha	With all bag and baggage.
Thikāṭhī	Pressure (on the enemy) due to his pursuit at a close range.

Thora tofa	Heavy artillery piece or cannon.
Tofa	Cannon, artillery piece.
Tofakhānā	Artillery.
Tofānchā lāga	Aim and direction of artillery fire.
Tofānchī māṇḍaṇī	Deployment of artillery pieces.
Tofānchī māragirī	Bombardment by cannon-fire.
Tofa otaṇe	To manufacture artillery pieces.
Tofechā marfā	A mould or matrix of an artillery piece.
Toṇḍāvara jāṇe	To attack from the front.
(Mulūkha) udarasa karaṇe	To ravage (a territory).
Uparālā	Reinforcement.
Yelagārā	1. An attack. 2. Forward march.